

IOWA BIRD LIFE

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION



Fall 2003 . Volume 73 . Number 4



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.

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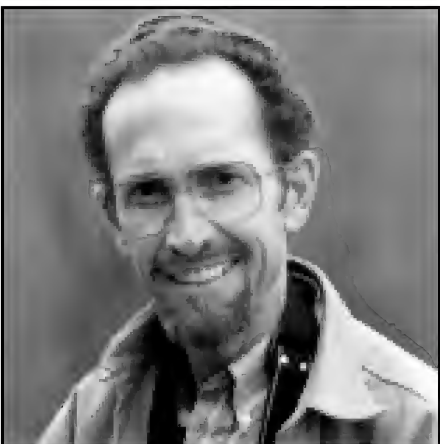
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FRONT COVER: Immature Little Blue Heron at Shetler RA ponds, Saylorville Lake, Polk Co., 22–26 July 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

Meet an Iowa Birder — Larry Stone

Ric W. Zarwell



Larry Stone

Members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, nature-oriented citizens, and those involved in the broad conservation community across Iowa hold Larry Stone in very high esteem, and rightly so.

Larry is, quite simply, one of the most admired and most widely published nature and conservation writer/photographers to have worked in Iowa during the past 30 plus years. As such, he's in rare company, and perhaps is in a modern-day class by himself. But you would never know this by having a conversation with this modest, almost understated, but very committed naturalist.

"I'm self conscious *about* being written *about*," were the first words from Larry as we sat together at Effigy Mounds National Monument for a recent conversation. But one soon learns that this soft-spoken, friendly, and very genuine man has led a life that is not only interesting in its own right, but one that might also serve as an

example for others to measure their own connections and commitments to the natural world. Larry's dedication to his twin passions — investigating and connecting his life with the natural world around him, and communicating to others in clear writing and evocative photos what he finds, appreciates, and understands — is a story of deep commitment and lifelong learning. It's also a story filled with significant accomplishments, and one that deserves wider recognition and accolades.

As outdoor writer and photographer for *The Des Moines Register* for 25 years from 1972–1997, Larry traveled Iowa's back roads exploring the prairies, wetlands, forests, and rivers of Iowa. His forte was investigating all aspects of man-land relationships and sharing stories and photos of the state's natural treasures and the people who cherish those resources. His 1999 book, *Listen to the Land*, collected some of his favorite works from that quarter-century of prowling Iowa's outdoors. Since leaving *The Des Moines Register*, Larry's freelance writing, photography, and lectures have focused on environmental education and our natural heritage. His work has appeared in *The Iowan*, *Iowa Natural Heritage*, and several national magazines. No matter what media are used, a sense of wonder and a commitment to wise use of natural resources is found throughout all that Larry communicates and does.

More recent work has won Larry even wider acclaim. In 2000, Larry was lead writer for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources publication, *Iowa: Portrait of the Land*. This book is an important synopsis of nature and natural resources management information, and is an excellent source for any nature-oriented Iowan who wishes to understand the trends that have shaped our landscape over time. Larry has not only become an institution among Iowa's naturalists and communicators focusing on natural resources, but he has also written the definitive biography of the highly respected Sylvan Runkel, who was surely an earlier icon for generations of naturalists. In April 2003, Larry and co-author Jon Stravers

published *Sylvan T. Runkel: Citizen of the Natural World*, a biography of this well-known Iowa conservationist and naturalist. Together these books provide a prescription for living effectively in long-lasting citizenship with nature's gifts that sustain our way of life.

Fortunately for those who seek his writing and photographs, Larry Stone has never outgrown his boyhood fascination for the creeks, pastures, and woodlots that he first connected with on his family's farm near Indianola in Warren County. Those roots nourished a sense of wonder that has lasted throughout his life and now help him capture the moods of the outdoors in his nature photography and writing. He and his wife, Margaret, have stayed close to the land on their farm along the Turkey River near Elkader, in Clayton County, where they manage woodlands and prairies. Larry also is a member of the Clayton County Conservation Board, and an avid canoeist, hunter, and bird-watcher.

Larry stated that he doesn't "have a life list, but birds have always played a central role in his life." His memories are of small fields, no herbicides, and great habitat where he found meadowlark nests, watched herons in farm ponds, and enjoyed seeing Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures soar in the sky. Hunting was a major activity too, especially for Ring-necked Pheasant and Bobwhite in the 1960s.

Larry attended Coe College in Cedar Rapids and this is where he really started birding, enjoying especially "a delightful ornithologist named Karl E. Goellner." His studies soon led him to conduct research on the growth rates of largemouth and smallmouth bass over two summers in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in northern Minnesota. Another study entitled "A Life History of Ring-necked Pheasants at Cedar Lake" was conducted in Linn County and focused on pheasants living in an urban environment. After college, Larry worked in Montana for the U.S. Forest Service where he focused on fire ecology and timber regrowth after elk and mule deer browsing. During this time he saw and enjoyed a number of western bird species including American Dipper, Varied Thrush, Lazuli Bunting, Gray Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, and Golden Eagle.

At Coe College, Larry met his future wife Margaret, from Traer, Iowa, and they were soon moving to the University of Michigan where Larry entered graduate school. Casual birding continued at nearby parks and wetlands, and memorable trips included a visit to the famous migration trap at Point Pelee, Ontario, and a trip northward in Michigan to see the Kirtland's Warbler prior to its big decline in numbers in the 1970s. Larry's graduate school experiences included taking courses from the internationally known environmental education leader, Bill Stapp, and helping organize a panel discussion on environmental issues for the nation's First Earth Day, 22 April 1970. The University of Michigan event also included several noteworthy personalities including David Brower, Barry Commoner, and Ralph Nader. In December 1970, Larry graduated from the University of Michigan with a M.A. degree in journalism, with about half of his graduate work in natural resources and half in journalism.

According to Larry, "a really big step was getting a job with *The Des Moines Register* in January, 1971." But because he had an extended summer canoe trip in Canada planned, Larry was allowed to work for four months on the newspaper's farm staff, and then went on a four-month canoe trip that began at Grand Portage, Minnesota. The trip began with a backbreaking 9-mile portage, and then retraced the route of the French voyagers through approximately 1,500 miles of Canadian wilderness. From this extraordinary experience alone, it should be clear that Larry is very fond of canoeing. Larry of course wrote articles about this adventure for *The Des Moines Register*, and several months after his return to full-time work he replaced Ries Tuttle, the Register's outdoor writer since the 1930s. Outdoor

writing in mid-twentieth century covered hunting and fishing almost exclusively, and Larry began including articles about various other forms of outdoor recreation and the many and varied ways that humans connect with the natural world.

"Gladys Black was a big influence on me in those early years, and I did several stories on Gladys. She called often to suggest stories and to refer me to other people that I wrote about," said Larry. One of the aspects of birding that pleases Larry the most is the great people he got to meet. "Birders are such helpful people," and among those Larry wrote about were Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, Ross Silcock, Jim Fuller, and Fred and Tom Kent. He also had a focus on wildlife research, and his memories of these times include articles on Jim Dinsmore, Jon Stravers, Dean Roosa, Pete Peterson, Elton Fawks, and Darwin Koenig. Larry recalls that Gladys Black referred him to Jon Stravers initially, and their friendship has lasted through the decades to include co-authoring the recent book on Sylvan Runkel, whom they both knew well and admired greatly.

Larry stated emphatically, that "I've felt privileged to learn about so many great birders and great individuals, and my work has been fascinating because of the wonderful people that have been involved in my stories." Larry realizes that he has learned a lot from Iowa birders through osmosis, and he is grateful for these insights. He is a 25-year member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and has thoroughly enjoyed being part of Christmas Bird Counts with various groups in many Iowa communities. His regular Sunday columns in the *The Des Moines Daily Tribune* and *Daily Register*, as well as articles in *Picture Magazine*, a locally produced weekly, are remembered fondly by readers throughout Iowa. This is strong testament to Larry's writing and photography skills, and to his deep sense of how Iowa's natural treasures can inform and inspire each of us.

Since 1974, Larry and Margaret have lived in Clayton County, and they built a home near Elkader in 1992. Larry continued to work for *The Des Moines Register* from 1971 up through 1997 when he was told to move to Des Moines. Larry and his wife chose not to leave the property and the way of life they cherished, and he has been a freelance writer/photographer ever since.

Among the birding experiences that Larry has enjoyed the most are trips to see the Sandhill Cranes in Nebraska, seeing raptor migrations at Hawk Ridge in Duluth, enjoying Atlantic Puffins and other species on islands off the coast of Maine, and finding ptarmigan in Alaska. In a career that has been as far reaching as it has been successful, Larry's current project is a book about the historical aspects of deer and deer hunting in Iowa, which is scheduled for publication in late 2003.

Living a life that has been filled both with traveling adventures to wonderful ecosystems, and exceptional contributions to the protection and wise management of our natural resources, we can truly say that Larry Stone has opened the eyes of many people to the splendors that Mother Nature has bestowed upon us. Long may he continue on the path he has chosen.

Larry and Margaret have two children. Their son, Andy, works as a civil engineer and lives in Troy, MO, with his wife, Suzanne, and their son, Isaac. Larry and Margaret's daughter, Emily, attends Northland College in Ashland, WI, where she is studying to be a naturalist.

The deep connections that Larry and Margaret have made with the nuances of the natural world throughout their lives together provide each of us with an example of how we might live in harmony with our own surroundings.

History of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Thomas H. Kent

Founded in 1923, the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (IOU) is 80 years old. In this paper I will review events leading up to the formation of the IOU, its founding, and changes that have occurred during the 80 years.

From the time that Marquette and Jolliet paddled down the Wisconsin River into the Mississippi on 17 June 1673 until Lewis and Clark reached western Iowa on 18 July 1904, there is little historical record of the birds seen by the early trappers, traders, and explorers who frequented the Mississippi and Missouri rivers (Kent 2003). Lewis and Clark carefully documented three species and recorded at least six more. Subsequent explorer-naturalists who added to the knowledge of Iowa's avifauna along the Missouri River included Thomas Say in 1819–1820, Duke Paul of Wurttemberg in 1825, Prince Maximilian of Wied in 1833–1834, and John James Audubon in 1843.

The first birders to reach the interior of Iowa included J. A. Allen (founder and first president of the American Ornithologists' Union) in west-central Iowa in 1867, T. Martin Trippe in Mahaska and Decatur counties in the early 1870s, and John Krider (a hunter-naturalist from Philadelphia) in north-central Iowa in the early 1870s. The first resident birder that I know of was William Savage who lived on a farm in Henry County from 1855 to 1908 and painted birds (Kent 2000b).

The 1880s was a decade of germination of American and Iowa ornithology. The American Ornithologists' Union was formed in 1883 by J. A. Allen, Elliott Coues, and William Brewster, and the first *A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds* was published in 1886. In 1884, Coues published the second (expanded) edition of his *Key to North American Birds*. These two books provided solid resources for young men (women would add their presence later) to become serious students of birds. In Iowa, Wells W. Cooke, a brief resident of the state, solicited migration data from Iowa birders in 1882 and 1883, and later extended his study to the Mississippi Valley in 1884 and 1885. This was the beginning of field reports. C. Hart Merriam, who had been appointed ornithologist in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy, published Cooke's work and solicited migration data for the entire United States for the next 25 years or more (My father contributed in 1907 and 1908.). Iowa bird students of note in this decade were Frank Bond who collected birds in Johnson County (later, in the U.S. Land Office, he created several wildlife refuges), Ed Currier who collected nests and eggs in Lee County (later developed department stores in Oregon and continued to send data to Merriam), Charles Rollins Keyes (later mining engineer and politician) and H. D. Williams who developed the first reliable list of Iowa birds in 1889 based on specimens, and Lynds Jones who as a farm boy studied the birds of Jasper and Poweshiek counties. Jones exemplifies early Iowa birders — raised on a farm, learned ornithology by himself using Coues' book, and



Thomas H. Kent

left Iowa at an early age to become national figure. He moved to Oberlin College in Ohio as a junior and stayed there to teach the first college class in ornithology and had long terms as president of the Wilson Ornithological Club and editor of the *Wilson Bulletin*.

The Iowa Ornithological Association (IOA), the predecessor of the IOU, was formed in 1894 and lasted until 1898. David Savage, at age 17, became the first and only editor of *The Iowa Ornithologist*, a good state journal for its day (Kent 2000a). Membership grew from 26 in 1894 to 76 in 1897. Three meetings were held before the Spanish American war and dissipation of members ended the organization. The trend for young men to develop an interest in birds and then turn to other things or leave the state and attain success continued; for example, David Savage and Harold Giddings (Kent 2002) remained as farmers and later became more interested in botany; Earnest Irons became dean of Rush Medical School and president of the American Medical Association; Paul Bartsch, who prepared a bibliography of Iowa birds as a Masters Degree thesis at the University of Iowa, became a malacologist at the Smithsonian Institute and taught at two universities in Washington, D.C.; and Rudolf M. Anderson wrote the *Birds of Iowa* (1907) as his Ph.D. dissertation before leaving for the American Museum of Natural History and later the National Museum of Canada as curator.

Iowa was without a state birding organization from 1899 to 1922. Only a few IOA members carried on. Bert Held Bailey got his M.D., but because of a heart condition he became a zoology professor at Coe College, where he developed a museum. He died in 1917 just before his book on raptorial birds of Iowa was published. Guy Rich, a physician in Sioux City for nearly 25 years, left Iowa for California. Another physician, Thomas C. Stephens, did not enjoy the summer he spent practicing medicine and became a biology professor at Morningside College in Sioux City and held that position until retirement in 1946. He was, perhaps, the most significant individual leading up to and during the first 25 years of the IOU. Some of his milestones included founding of the Sioux City Bird Club (1913), serving as Wilson Club president (1914–1917) and Iowa Conservation Association president (1915), publishing seasonal winter records from northwestern Iowa (1917–1922), organizing the IOU (1923), serving as editor of the *Wilson Bulletin* (1925–1938), and authoring *An Annotated Bibliography of Iowa Ornithology* (1957). Althea Sherman studied Chimney Swifts in a tower build on her farm in Clayton County and wrote extensively on her studies of this and other species during this time. Ira N. Gabrielson was another Iowa farm boy who left Iowa for greater accomplishments. He was a student of Stephens beginning in 1908 and conducted bird studies during the summer. After a brief stint as a teacher in Marshalltown (and compiling of a county list), he joined the Biological Survey, becoming its head in 1935 and first head of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1940. He wrote state bird books on Oregon and Alaska.

During the interim period between the IOA and IOU, nine county lists were published and Christmas Bird Counts were started with Iowa counts published in *Bird-Lore* (predecessor to *Audubon Magazine*). Wells W. Cooke returned to the Biological Survey to compile and publish the migration data that Merriam had collected (completed by Harry C. Oberholser after Cooke died in 1916, including 739 records from 48 Iowa locations), and Fred Pierce appeared on the scene with 26 publications.

By 1923, Stephens must have known a number of Iowans interested in birds, and he had had ten years' experience with the Sioux City Bird Club. He joined with Charles Reuben Keyes (professor of German at Cornell College and former member of the IOA) and Dayton

Stoner (professor of Zoology at the University of Iowa) in calling for an organizational meeting at Ames in conjunction with the Iowa Conservation Association. The meeting in the forenoon of 28 February 1923 attracted 50 delegates who listened to papers, formed an organization, and elected officers (Walter M. Rosene, president; T. C. Stephens, vice president; Mary L. Bailey, secretary; Thomas H. Whitney, treasurer; and LeRoy Titus Weeks, Homer R. Dill, and Arthur J. Palas, executive council).

The purposes of the new organization were to (1) renew and carry on the activities of the IOA, (2) encourage scientific study of bird life of the state and present a united support of such laws as are necessary for the conservation of both game and song birds, (3) afford an opportunity for the bird students of the state to become mutually acquainted, and (4) look forward to possible cooperation with national organizations working along similar lines.

These guiding purposes appear to have sufficed until 1943 when the first constitution was written (*IBL* 15:15–17). The constitution was revised in 1953 (*IBL* 23:37–40) and in 1985 (*IBL* 55:116–119) and amended in 1994 (*IBL* 64:119–120).

The second and third meetings were also held at Ames (8 March 1924 and 21 February 1925). At the second meeting an attempt to change the name from Iowa Ornithologists' Union to Iowa Ornithological Society was rejected. The 50 attendees listened to 11 papers on a variety of subjects and garnered support for hunting restriction bills. There was discussion about affiliation with the Wilson Club — members joining that club were designated as affiliate members of the IOU, others as local members.

The changes in the IOU over the 80 years of its existence will now be summarized in terms of membership, meetings, publications, and projects.

The membership in the IOU grew progressively from 100 in 1924 to 464 in 1980 and has remained close to 450 since (Figure 1). On 16 October 1923, T. C. Stephens asked the prophetic question, "What can we do to attract members and hold the present membership?" As might be expected, membership dues grew more slowly in the early years, starting at \$ 0.50 in 1923 and doubling in 1928, 1952, 1975, and 1980 to \$8. Since then, dues rose to \$12 in 1986, \$15 in 1990, and \$20 in 1998 (Figure 2).

Meetings have changed gradually over the years. The fourth meeting at Atlantic on 14–15 May 1926 was the first to last two days and to include field trips. Members gathered on Friday morning, listened to papers in the afternoon, attended a banquet in the evening, participated in field trips from 5:00 to 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, and left after a picnic breakfast.

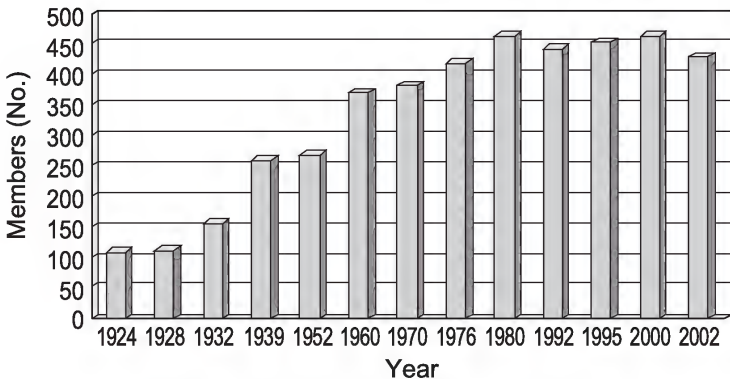


Figure 1. Number of Iowa Ornithologists' Union members by year.

In 1927 and 1928, joint meetings were held with Nebraska at Sioux City and Omaha. In 1943, the meeting was decreased to one day because of World War II, and a spring count was started for those who could not travel. In September 1947, Editor Fred Pierce and his wife Riva on the spur of the moment invited members to their house for a fall get-together and 60 attended. After three successful fall meetings at Winthrop, meetings continued at other locations, expanding to two days in 1959, and three days in 1983. (The spring meeting was expanded to three days in 1961.) Spring meeting attendance averaged about 120 from 1946 to 1985 and then dropped to about 80 (Figure 3). In contrast, fall meetings have attracted about 80 members since inception. In recent years, spring and fall meetings have been similar in attendance and format with a three-day program including a Friday evening get-together; Saturday and Sunday breakfast and field trips; papers, business meeting, and banquet on Saturday; and Sunday noon lunch and compilation of the list of birds seen. The most frequent locations for meetings have been Cedar Fall/Waterloo (14), Ames (11), the Great Lakes area (8), and Sioux City (8).

The first publications of the IOU were 22 mimeographed letters from 1923 to 1928, mostly by the president or the secretary. The early letters dealt mainly with business and meetings, the later ones incorporated bird notes (Pierce 1936). In 1929 and 1930, eight issues of the letter-sized *The Bulletin [of the] Iowa Ornithologists' Union* were published under the editorship of F. L. R. Roberts. In the last issue, Dr. Roberts turned the editorship over to Fred J. Pierce, who in turn decided, against the advice of President Walter Bennett, to create a more scientific journal, *Iowa Bird Life* (Pierce 1984).

Fred Pierce edited the new journal from 1931 to 1960. He was followed by Peter C. Petersen (1961–1985), Thomas H. Kent (1986–1989), James J. Dinsmore (1990–1999), and Kayleen A. Niyo (2000–present). A newsletter, *IOU News*, was started in 1986 and edited by Hank and Linda Zaletel (1985–2000) and Paul Hertzell (2001–present). A website, *Iowa Birds and Birding*, developed by Ann M. Johnson in the late 1990s, became affiliated with the IOU in 2001 and was given status as an IOU publication (under the Publications Committee) in 2003.

Iowa Bird Life grew gradually from 50 pages in 1931 to 130 pages in 1981, tapered off, and then jumped to 200 pages in 2001. The appearance of the journal changed with the

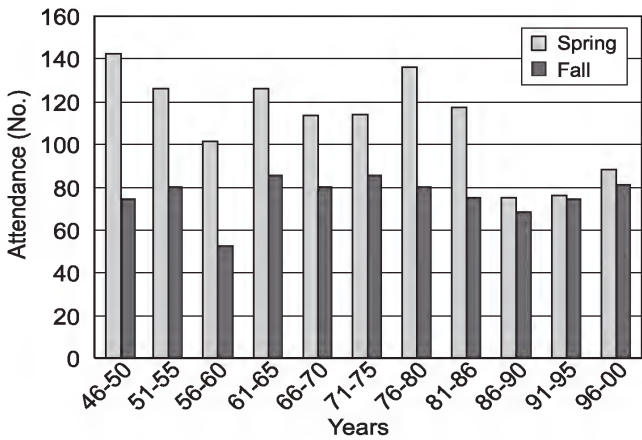


Figure 2. Iowa Ornithologists' Union dues in dollars by year.

editors and, in recent years, with the rapidly developing computer technology. The cover was black-and-white under Pierce. Petersen introduced seasonally color-coded covers with a bird drawing for each year and table of contents. Kent began using a bird photograph on each cover; that practice continues.

Articles have been a mainstay of the journal throughout. Reports of birds in Iowa were included under the rubric General Notes from 1931 to 1985, which included short notes by contributors. Much of the content of these notes was consolidated under field reports — seasonal reports of Iowa birds compiled by Woodward H. Brown (1961–1976), Nicholas S. Halmi (1976–1979), Thomas H. Kent (1979–1999), James J. Dinsmore (1984–present), W. Ross Silcock (1984–1995), Carl J. Bendorf (1985–1991), Michael C. Newlon (1984), Robert K. Myers (1986–1988), Stephen J. Dinsmore (1989–1990, 1994), James F. Fuller (1990–1994, 2000), Robert I. Cecil (1996–present), Matthew C. Kenne (2000–present), and Paul Hertzell (2001–present).

Iowa played an important role in the development of field reports. As noted earlier, Wells W. Cooke started collecting migration data in Iowa in 1882, and seasonal data collection continued under the auspices of the Biological Survey. In 1917, seasonal reports began to appear in *Bird-Lore*, but these were oriented around large cities — Iowa was not included until 1945. Individual contributors were not listed until 1962, probably because the field reports data in *Iowa Bird Life* began to be passed on to the regional editors of Audubon Field Notes (split from *Audubon Magazine*, the successor to *Bird-Lore*).

In 1986, the letter-like General Notes were replaced by short articles, mostly reports on rarities. In 1981, the Records Committee, which was formed in 1980, added annual reports. The striking increase in birding activities that occurred in the late 1970s is manifest by the increase in species reported in the field reports and evaluated by the Records Committee from 285 in 1976 to 328 in both 1995 and 1996. Since then about 320 species have been recorded per year.

The results of Iowa Christmas Bird Counts have been recorded in the journal since the 1937 CBC. Earlier CBCs were published only in *Bird-Lore*. Editors of the CBC were Fred J. Pierce (1937–1956), Woodward H. Brown (1957–1966), Peter C. Petersen (1967, 1971,

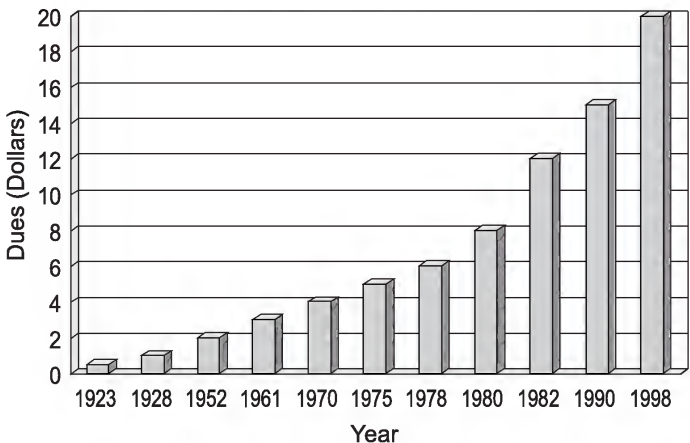


Figure 3. Attendance (as 5-year averages) at spring and fall Iowa Ornithologists' Union meetings.

1975), John Faaborg 1968–1970), James P. Rod (1972), Richard Crawford (1973–1974), W. Ross Silcock (1976–1995), Stephen J. Dinsmore (1996–2000), and Aaron Brees (2001–present).

Spring Bird Counts were published from 1943 to 1948, when this war-time spring activity was discontinued, and from 1993 to 2001 as part of a national count day, which has ceased in many states.

Other contents of the journal include banding summaries (1961–1983), meeting reports (1931–1985), IOU business meetings (1986–present), membership news (1931–1965), “50 Years Ago” (1994–present), obituaries, biographies, book reviews, and illustrations.

The first report on bird banding was from Sioux City by Marie Dales (1929). Malcolm McDonald (1936) described the banding of 2,231 Chimney Swifts at Fairfield from 1931 to 1935. Margaret and Myrle Jones, who banded birds in Iowa from 1933 to 1965, contributed several articles to *Iowa Bird Life* on banding activities. Annual banding summaries were a feature of the journal from 1961 to 1983. Peter C. Petersen and Charles and Darleen Ayres were the most active banders during this period, but many others were involved. Banding activity has tapered off since then, and the only source of information on birds banded is from Patuxent’s Bird Banding Laboratory, U.S. Department of the Interior, Laurel, MD.

From 20 to 30 obituaries were published per year from the 1930s through the 1960s, 10 or less since then. The number of biographical sketches per year has varied, with the most in the late 1980s and 2000s. Book reviews were prevalent during the Pierce and Petersen editorships (5 and 32 per year respectively), but have dropped to less than three per year since then.

From 1931 through 2002, there have been 1,625 illustrations in *Iowa Bird Life* — 887 of birds (177 drawings, 710 photos), 371 of people (203 individuals), 189 maps, 24 charts, and 154 of places and things. Earnest W. Steffen contributed 108 of the bird drawings. More than half of the bird photos were taken by Tom Kent (119), Fred Kent (108), Reid Allen (28), Steve Dinsmore (26), Jim Dinsmore (17), Bruce Stiles (16), Pete Petersen (16), Herb Darow (14), and Don Poggensee (12). In addition, there were 137 contributors of 316 bird photos.

One of the first projects of the IOU was the establishment of the American Goldfinch as the official state bird in 1933 (Zaletel 1992).

The IOU was not directly involved in compiling a state list until 1977. Anderson’s (1907) authoritative state book was followed by Philip A. Dumont’s revised list (1933). Woodward H. Brown (1971) provided an annotated list. In the meantime, a committee, apparently of the IOU, published a complicated distributional Checklist (Ennis et al. 1954) and Martin L. Grant (1963) published an even more complicated list. Next, a committee of the IOU originally appointed to revise the field checklist took on the whole state list (Brown et al. 1977). Since the Checklist Committee was replaced by the Records Committee in 1980, a new *Official List of Iowa Birds* has been published by the committee in 1982, 1987, 1991, and 1999. Review of all records of Casual and Accidental species, old and new, by the committee has resulted in a checklist based on carefully reviewed records and has led to publication of two additional books on Iowa birds (Dinsmore et al. 1984, Kent and Dinsmore 1996).

Since 1930, the IOU has published a card-sized *Field Checklist of Iowa Birds*. The first one sold for one cent. Since then revised field cards appeared in 1936, 1943, 1957, 1968, 1982, 1987, 1991, and 1999. The first committee of the IOU to formally revise this list was created in 1968.

The first state records committees were formed in the early 1970s (CA 1970, AZ 1972, MN 1974, WI 1978). In 1980, the Iowa committee set guidelines based on the Minnesota committee and to a lesser extent on the California committee. Iowa's committee preceded that of other adjacent states (IL 1985, NE 1985, MO 1987, and SD 1987).

Articles on birding areas of Iowa were published in *Iowa Bird Life* from 1971 to 1979 and compiled into a book published by the IOU (Petersen 1979). New birding areas articles were published on a regular basis since 1985, and since 2001 many of these have been placed on the IOU website *Iowa Birds and Birding*.

In 1977, 1978, and 1979, the IOU along with the State Preserves Board sponsored forays during the breeding season at three corners of the state designed to survey the flora and fauna of those sites.

Winter feeder surveys, started by Rick Hollis and sponsored by the IOU and Department of Natural Resources, were carried out from 1984 to 1999, when funds for compiling the data dried up. Extensive breeding bird surveys were carried out from 1985 to 1990 sponsored by the IOU, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Jackson et al. 1996).

The IOU Rare Bird Alert was started in 1982 by Rick Hollis with help from Carl Bendorf. The recorded message was compiled from incoming messages and dictated by Rick Hollis (1982–1986), Carl Bendorf (1985–1987), Bob Cecil (1987–1988), Jim Fuller (1988–2001), and Pete Ernzen (2001–present). The format used by Fuller and the almost daily updating made the Iowa Birdline one of the best in the country, although we did not have as many rare birds as some states. In 1996, Ann Johnson began to put the Birdline information on her website, and she was instrumental in developing the IOU sponsored Listserv as an alternative to the telephone. Now most messages come in by e-mail and the report is available online. When Jim Fuller retired in 2001, the Birdline was taken over by Pete Ernzen and the Listserv message by Mike Dooley, and subsequently by Danny Akers in 2003.

For many years the IOU had several dedicated Librarians: Warren Keck (1942–1948), Harold Ennis (1948–1965), and Martin Grant (1965–1968). Apparently the books and journals were moved from Coe College to Cornell College to Northern Iowa University. Frances Crouter continued the office after Martin Grant died, but when the university threatened to dispose of the library, Beryl and Pat Layton rescued the contents and moved them to the Laytons basement. Pat Layton became Librarian from 1971 to 1985, when the Library/Historical Committee replaced the office of Librarian. Pat made a list of the contents (mostly journals and a few books) and tried to sell them. Hank Zaletel was instrumental in having the Iowa State University Library, Department of Special Collections become a repository for IOU historical materials. The books and journals collected by the early Librarians are now best found at university libraries. Fred Pierce actually had the best collections of Iowa-related journals and books, but it was sold after he died.

The IOU sponsored *A Teacher's Activity Booklet About Iowa Birds*. The first edition (1992) was developed by Linda Zaletel, Rick Hollis, Beth Brown, and others, and the second edition was a revision by Zaletel. Both editions sold out.

Other IOU projects have include Big Day Birdathons Bluebird conferences, Kestrel nest box program, special field trips, and a photo contest (1950).

In summary, the IOU over the last 80 years has been an organization for all levels of birding, from amateur to professional. The annual meetings have provided a mingling of ideas and new-found friends. An informative newsletter and creative website have comple-

mented the publication of a scientific journal — the main outlet for information on Iowa birds. The IOU has carried out many successful projects over the years.

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Nesting Success and Juvenile Survival for Wood Thrushes in an Eastern Iowa Forest Fragment

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ABSTRACT

Forests in NE Iowa are highly fragmented, which may affect sustainability and dynamics of bird populations. We studied Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) nesting success at the Mines of Spain Recreation Area near Dubuque, IA during 2001. We also monitored movements of juveniles using radio transmitters during the birds' initial dispersal from the nest site, and we used DNA analyses to determine their gender. Seventy percent of the nests ($n=10$) were parasitized by Brown-headed Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*). The daily nest success rate was 0.9612 ($SE=0.0189$), and daily juvenile survival was 0.9703 ($SE=0.0169$). Three juveniles dispersed 270 m (female), 746 m (male), and 980 m (male). Females in our simulation model built 2.90 nests per year ($SD = 1.02$), and 0.63 fledglings per female were alive at the end of the breeding season. We used a simulation model to predict annual population growth for this small breeding population as 0.546 (95% CI = ± 0.025). During 2001, this population can certainly be classified as a "sink," which reinforces the need for more information on regional juvenile and adult movements.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of small populations can be critical to their temporal sustainability. The small forest fragments remaining in many Iowa landscapes have proportionally more "edge"; similar habitat effects have caused lower reproductive success for Wood Thrushes (*Hylocichla mustelina*) in other regions (Fauth 2000; Weinberg and Roth 1998). Edge-specific predators (e.g., raccoons [*Procyon lotor*]) and brood parasites such as Brown-headed Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*) often cause increased nest failure for songbirds in fragmented habitats (Donovan et al. 1995; Robinson et al. 1995).

Juvenile dispersal, the distance traveled from the nest site during the first few weeks after fledging, is poorly understood, although recent data have emphasized its importance to managing habitats for bird species (Ferriere et al. 2000). Dispersal of excess juveniles from growing, or "source," populations can be critical for the support of declining, or "sink," populations (Pulliam 1988). However, high dispersal of juveniles may result in local population declines (Roth and Johnson 1993). Therefore, determining juvenile dispersal patterns appears to be a high priority when assessing the demographic viability of critical species.

Fragmented landscapes offer a different array of choices for juvenile birds than large, contiguous forests. Nest success, fledgling survival, and juvenile dispersal patterns are apt to reflect those differences, and population dynamics should be directly affected. To our knowledge, there are no published studies that simultaneously estimate nest success, daily fledgling survival, and fledgling dispersal for songbirds in fragmented habitats.

Dispersal dynamics could be especially important to local population dynamics in fragmented habitats. Plissner and Gowaty (1996) found that juvenile female Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*, another member of Muscicapidae) dispersed greater distances than males.

Lang et al. (2002) reported a bimodal distribution of juvenile dispersal distances for Wood Thrushes, but sex-specific dispersal could not be determined as gender cannot be determined by external characteristics for juvenile Wood Thrushes (Pyle et al. 1987). Local breeding populations of Wood Thrushes have the potential, then, to decline because of the combination of adult female mortality and juvenile female dispersal distances.

Our research goal was to determine if the Wood Thrush population at Mines of Spain Recreation Area was self-sustainable. Our objectives were to (1) estimate nest success, (2) estimate juvenile survival rates using radio telemetry, (3) determine gender of juvenile Wood Thrushes, (4) document movement patterns of juvenile Wood Thrushes after fledging, and (5) determine annual population growth rate (λ) for the local population.

METHODS

Field Methods

Our study site was located in the Mines of Spain Recreation Area (MSRA), south of Dubuque, IA and within 0.5 kilometers (km) of the Mississippi River. MSRA habitats include 558 hectares (ha) of oak/hickory-dominated (*Quercus and Carya* spp.) upland and maple-dominated (*Acer* spp.) floodplain forests, wetlands, and small prairie fragments. Approximately 70% of land cover in MSRA is forest, but MSRA forests are highly dissected (Figure 1) and include almost no “core” area (as defined by Temple and Cary 1988). Forest habitats outside the park are even more fragmented (Figure 1). The Wood Thrush population in MSRA was highly localized, being found in few areas within the park; many areas appeared to have suitable habitat but did not contain breeding Wood Thrushes during our scouting of the entire area in summer 2001.

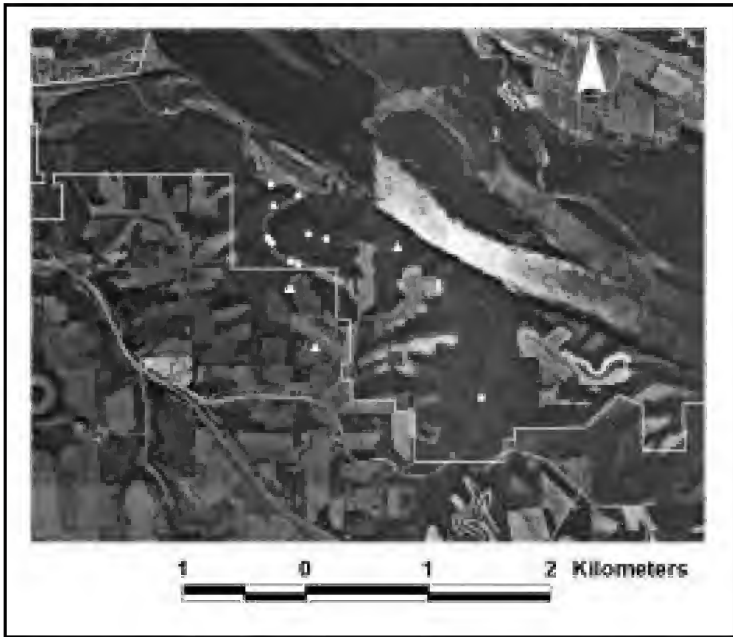


Figure 1. Forest habitat and boundaries of Mines of Spain Recreation Area (MSRA) near Dubuque, IA. Mississippi River is the northern boundary of MSRA. Circles indicate Wood Thrush nest locations; triangles indicate dispersal locations of three surviving fledglings.



Figure 2. Movements of a male juvenile Wood Thrush from its nest at Mines of Spain Recreation Area (MSRA) near Dubuque, IA. Triangle near “A” indicates nest site, and circles indicate daily telemetry locations. “B” indicates dispersal location, away from the MSRA (see Figure 1).

We captured and banded adult Wood Thrushes using mist nets placed in suspected territories, usually from 6:30 to 10:00 A.M. CST. We searched for Wood Thrush nests in areas where we heard singing males during our scouting. We also found nests by attaching radio transmitters to the backs of five adult females with nongel super glue, which allowed us to follow them to their nests. The adhesive failed within 2 to 4 days, and the radio was reused on another female.

Nest locations were marked with blue flagging 5 to 10 meters (m) from the nest tree. Nests were monitored every 2 to 4 days until the nestlings fledged or the nest failed. Nest failure was assumed when nests appeared disturbed, broken egg shells were found, or nests were empty more than three days before the calculated fledging date. Nests that fledged at least one Wood Thrush nestling were considered successful. Mirrors mounted on extension poles enabled us to visually examine the contents of the nest; all nests found were within reach of poles. Nest locations were mapped using GPS receivers.

When the birds fledged we banded them and attached 1.6-gram (g) radio transmitters, using the Rappole and Tipton (1991) thigh harness method, as described by Powell et al. (2000). Blood was collected from the brachial artery using capillary tubes, and stabilized in buffer solution. We relocated the fledglings once every 1 to 2 days using handheld antennas until the fledglings died or the signal disappeared. We used GPS receivers to document the location of the juveniles. We terminated our radio telemetry observations on 20 August 2001, after the initial juvenile dispersal event.

Analytical Methods

We estimated daily nest success using program SURVIV (White 1983) as our monitoring data contained intervals of different lengths (Bart and Robson 1982; Hensler and Nichols 1981). Cohorts of radio-marked fledglings were used to estimate juvenile daily survival probabilities, also with program SURVIV (White 1983). We used the delta method (Weir 1990), described by Powell et al. (2000) to approximate the variance for daily nest success and survival when re-scaling of time intervals was necessary.

ArcView[®] version 3.2 was used develop a database of movement locations; we used tools within ArcView[®] to determine daily movement distances and dispersal distances from the nest location. Juvenile dispersal distance was measured from the nest to the first known location of the bird after a major movement from the nest area (example: from "A" to "B" in Figure 2). Sex of juveniles was determined by amplifying sex-specific introns on the CHD gene, as described in Griffiths et al. (1998).

We used the Knutson et al. (2001) SAS/IML productivity model to estimate P , the average number of fledglings produced per female per year, alive at the end of the breeding season. This stochastic model is a modification of the Powell et al. (1999) productivity model to include brood parasitism. Model inputs included our estimates of daily nest success, clutch size, parasitism rate, effect of parasitism, and juvenile survival; we obtained an estimate of adult survival from Powell et al. (1999). We simulated the breeding season for 200 females. The productivity model outputs were (1) the average number of nests initiated by a female during the year, (2) the average number of successful nests for females during the breeding season, (3) P , and (4) the average number of parasitized nests per female during the breeding season. The stochastic model incorporated the uncertainty in our demographic parameter estimates; by repeating our simulation 200 times, we were able to estimate the SD for the model outputs.

We used a second simulation model, described by Powell et al. (2000), to estimate the annual population growth rate (λ) and the variance of the growth rate ($\text{var}[\lambda]$) of the Wood Thrush population in MSRA. The SAS/IML model stochastically simulates 200 years of population growth, using point and variance estimates for annual adult survival (S_A), juvenile survival from the end of the breeding season to the next breeding season (S_J), and annual fecundity, or number of females alive at end of breeding season produced per female (B). We assumed a 50:50 nestling sex ratio, and calculated $B = 0.5 \lambda P$, where P was predicted by our first simulation model, above. Our study provided estimates of S_J during the breeding season, but did not provide S_J during the winter; therefore, we used a value of $1/2 S_A$, following Donovan et al. (1995). Because ours was a single-year study, we could not incorporate annual variation in demographic parameters (Link and Nichols 1994), which prevents us from generalizing our model predictions on a temporal scale.

Following Powell et al. (2000), we used the approximation of $\text{var}(\lambda)$ to construct a 95% confidence interval (CI) to determine whether $\lambda = 1.0$. We calculated upper and lower CIs for λ as: $\pm 1.96 \cdot [\text{var}(\lambda)]^{(1/2)}$ (Sokal and Rohlf 1981). Johnson (1999) suggested the use of confidence intervals, in place of hypothesis testing; in our case, if the 95% CI did not include 1.0, a source ($\lambda > 1.0$) or sink ($\lambda < 1.0$) designation could be assigned.

RESULTS

We found 10 active Wood Thrush nests at MSRA. Six nests (60%) produced Wood Thrush fledglings. Daily nest success was 0.9612 (SE = 0.0189); 24-day (nesting interval for Wood Thrush) success was 0.3873 (SE = 0.1830, Table 1).

Seven nests (70%) were parasitized by Brown-headed Cowbirds (Table 1). The average number of cowbird eggs in parasitized nests was 1.7; only one nest was abandoned due to parasitism. Three cowbird juveniles were known to have fledged from two nests. Two parasitized nests had no host eggs, and two parasitized nests fledged only Wood Thrush young.

Low nest success and high parasitism (including nests with no host eggs) reduced the available fledglings for radio telemetry study; we were able to radio-mark only six juvenile Wood Thrushes. DNA analyses revealed that two radio-marked young were males, and four were females. Three radio-marked fledglings (all females) were killed by predators within five days of fledging. Daily juvenile survival rate was 0.9703 (SE = 0.0169, Table 1); the weekly estimate was 0.8097 (SE = 0.0974).

Our simulation model predicted that adult females at MSRA built 2.90 nests (SD = 1.02) based on demographic information we gathered (Table 1); on average, 1.2 nests (SD = 0.64) per female were successful, and 2.2 were parasitized (SD = 1.05). Our model predicted that average P (total young per female, surviving to the end of the breeding season) was 0.63 (SD = 0.82). The second simulation model predicted an annual population growth rate of $\lambda = 0.546$ (95% CI = ± 0.025 , Table 1), well below replacement ($\lambda = 1.0$).

The low nest success resulted in few fledglings that could be radio-marked, and only three fledglings survived long enough to disperse from the nest site. We documented juvenile dispersal distances of 270 m (male), 746 m (female), and 980 m (male, see Figure 2). These dispersals occurred after 22, 18, and 28 days, respectively. The female that dispersed 746 m probably dispersed farther, beyond the boundaries of MSRA, as we lost the radio signal immediately after this initial dispersal. Therefore, only the 270-m male disperser stayed within MSRA (Figure 1).

DISCUSSION

Our study provides the first gender determination of juvenile Wood Thrushes in the context of dispersal, but high nest mortality and high predation of fledglings prevented us from determining whether female juveniles disperse farther from the nest. However, our successful application of the Griffiths et al. (1998) method to juvenile Wood Thrushes provides stimulus for this type of research in the future.

Patterns of juvenile dispersal from MSRA nests were similar to those reported by Anders et al. (1998), Vega Rivera et al. (1998), and Lang et al. (2002). These studies reported juveniles dispersing to dense "survival" habitats. MSRA dispersal distances were also shorter than the average reported by Anders et al. (1998): 2.08 km; Vega Rivera et al. (1998): 1.5 km; and Lang et al. (2002): 2.19 km. Roth et al. (1996) reported many Wood Thrush juveniles staying within a 15-ha forest fragment in Delaware. Juveniles from MSRA may have also been constrained by the lack of contiguous forest to use for dispersal. Lang et al. (2002) reported some juveniles made more than one major postfledging dispersal movement before migration. Because we terminated our observations in late August, perhaps some juveniles eventually dispersed farther from MSRA. Juvenile dispersal patterns at MSRA indicate that lands surrounding public lands are important for supporting bird populations, as two of our juveniles dispersed beyond the borders of MSRA. Therefore, conservation efforts in this region should focus on a landscape approach.

Anders et al. (1997) reported daily survival estimates between 0.938 and 0.990 during the first three weeks after fledging, after which survival was 1.000 for weeks 4–8. Our value of 0.9703 is much lower than the Powell et al. (2000) report of daily survival of 0.997 throughout the postfledging period. Our pattern of early mortalities is similar to patterns

reported by Anders et al. (1997) and Powell et al. (2000). Although our sample of radio-marked juveniles was smaller, the sample size was considered during the parameter estimation process; the SEs and 95% CIs that we report allow our study to be compared with others. Our 50% predation rate matches the Anders et al. (1997) estimate of a 50.6% chance of predation after fledging. All mortalities were females, but our sample size prevents any generalizations to the population.

Are Wood Thrush populations in eastern Iowa self-maintaining? The estimate of $\lambda = 0.546$ (95% CI = ± 0.025) certainly suggests that this was a “sink” population in 2001. High brood parasitism, high nest predation, and high juvenile mortality may be a function of the fragmented landscape of the region. Trine (1998) reported $P = 0.3\text{--}2.1$ (not accounting for juvenile mortality), which overlaps our estimate of $P = 0.63$. In more contiguous forests of Georgia, Powell et al. (1999) reported $P = 2.04$ (more than 3X our estimate) using the same simulation model. Our study site is near the Robinson et al. (1995) western Illinois study site, which was determined to be highly fragmented—low average forest patch size, almost no forest interior area, and approximately 20% of the landscape forested. Although our parasitism rate was high (70%), it is less than the predicted rate of approximately 85% (Robinson et al. 1995); our daily nest mortality rate of 0.0388 matches the Robinson et al. (1995) prediction of approximately 0.04.

If our estimated growth rate is realized yearly in MSRA, it would take a local population of 100 birds (probably a high estimate) only nine years to be reduced to less than one bird, without immigration. Therefore, it would appear that MSRA Wood Thrush populations are sustained largely through immigration events. This may explain the localized nature of MSRA Wood Thrush populations and the lack of Wood Thrushes in some apparently suitable habitat areas. But, if MSRA is a “sink,” where is the “source”?

Knutson et al. (2001) reported that Wood Thrush populations in Minnesota and Wisconsin portions of the Driftless Area Ecoregion were a “source,” with a $\lambda = 1.08$ (± 0.05 95% confidence interval). The Knutson et al. (2001) parasitism rate was only 53%, compared to 70% in MSRA. The Robinson et al. (1995) predictions for western Illinois and southeast Iowa would not favor them as the source of immigrants to MSRA. If 2001 was a representative year for Wood Thrushes in MSRA, it is highly probable that populations to the north of Dubuque, IA (MN or WI) are maintaining the MSRA Wood Thrush population

Table 1. Demographic parameter estimates (SE or SD) for Wood Thrushes at Mines of Spain Recreation Area, near Dubuque, Iowa in 2001. Information is provided for estimation methods; see text for further information.

Parameter	Estimate	Estimation method
Daily nest success (DNS)	0.9612 (0.0189)	Field data, program SURVIV
24-day nest success	0.3873 (0.1830)	DNS ²⁴
Parasitism rate	70%	Field observations
Daily juvenile survival	0.9703 (0.0169)	Field data, program SURVIV
Average nests built (per female)	2.90 (1.02)	Simulation model
Annual productivity (yg per female)	0.63 (0.82)	Simulation model
Annual population growth rate	0.546	Simulation model

through immigration of excess individuals. Our study, combined with the results of Knutson et al. (2001), reinforces the need for more information on regional juvenile and adult Wood Thrush movements.

Acknowledgments. This research project was funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3, and the Iowa College Foundation's Maytag Foundation student/faculty grant fund. A. Garner and J. Streit were instrumental in collecting field data. Equipment and computer resources were provided by the University of Dubuque, Dubuque, IA. We are grateful to W. Buchholz, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, for use of Mines of Spain as a study area. S. Rush provided comments on an earlier version of this manuscript. Sexing of juveniles from blood samples was done by D. Shealer, C. Cleary, and other personnel at the Medical Associates Recombinant DNA Laboratory at Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa.

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Field Reports — Summer 2003

James J. Dinsmore

WEATHER

The weather in June and July was pretty average this year. June temperatures averaged 68 degrees, 1.7 degrees below average, and rainfall averaged 4.58 inches, slightly above normal. It was the 39th coolest and 64th driest June in 131 years of records. It was cool early in the month, then warm during the middle of the month, and more average the rest of June. The high was 97 at Waterloo on the 24th and the low was 40 at Elkader on the 20th. The first third of the month was wet with a statewide average of about 2 inches of rain. After a fairly dry middle third of the month, the last third was wet with about 2 inches of rain statewide. There was generally little severe weather with only one tornado reported. Oskaloosa with 8.6 inches was the wet spot of the state.

Temperatures in July averaged 73.6 degrees, slightly below average, and rainfall averaged 4 inches, 0.24 inches below average. It was the 54th coolest and 53rd wettest July on record. In general it was fairly warm for the first third of June, cooler for several days, and quite hot late in the month. The high was 101 at Sidney and Shenandoah on the 26th and the low was 47 at Lowden on the 19th. Rainfall averaged about 3 inches over the first nine days but it was dry after that. Several areas experienced high winds and severe weather on 3–5 July, and tornadoes were reported in the Cedar Rapids area on 20 July. The most rainfall was at Donnellson in Lee County with 9.3 inches for the month.



James J. Dinsmore

HABITAT CONDITIONS

The general lack of much severe weather and the absence of significant flooding meant that habitat conditions were probably quite good for most birds. As in other recent years, federal programs can have a significant effect on the nesting habitat for many bird species, especially grassland birds. Although CRP lands are largely gone from northern Iowa, they still provide significant amounts of habitat in parts of southern Iowa. A heartening trend is the increasing evidence of lands enrolled in buffer strips and other lowland protection programs of the USDA. This year I noticed numerous such lands with signs posted to recognize those programs. Although we know little about what bird species might benefit from them, several current studies at Iowa State University should help alleviate that information need.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

The number of spring migrants that lingered into June was unusual this summer. Virtually every year has at least a few late shorebirds, flycatchers, and warblers, but this year far more songbirds were reported than usual. These included about 23 reports of four species of flycatchers, three of two species of vireos, four of two species of thrushes, 20 of

10 species of warblers, and three of three species of sparrows, a grand total of 53 reports of 21 species. In addition there were early June reports of seven species of migrant shorebirds, four species of terns, and one species of gull. Obviously, some birders didn't hang up their binoculars at the end of May.

Among the breeding or potential breeding species, there were several interesting finds including Red-necked Grebe, Osprey, Mississippi Kite, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Barn Owl, Burrowing Owl, Black-billed Magpie, and Clay-colored Sparrow. Two successful Osprey nests were the first documented for Iowa. Apparently four of five Barn Owl nests reported were successful while the three Burrowing Owls reported included one from 1989. Both the Trumpeter Swan and Peregrine Falcon reintroduction programs had good years that inched them closer to their goals. The number of Bald Eagle nests increased, and more Least Bitterns were reported than ever. Sandhill Cranes seemed to be finding new nesting places in Iowa, and Eurasian Collared-Doves continued their occupation of Iowa.

Several species of high conservation concern apparently had good nesting seasons this year. Piping Plovers seemed to have good success at both Council Bluffs and Sioux City, and the number of Least Terns found at Council Bluffs was the most in several years. There were an encouraging number of reports of scrubland species like Bell's Vireo, Willow Flycatcher, Northern Mockingbird, and Yellow-breasted Chat this summer but Loggerhead Shrikes seemed to be scarcer than ever. Wood Thrushes were reported by many this year but other woodland species like Veery and Cerulean Warbler received less notice. Among grassland birds, Henslow's Sparrows were found at an increasing number of sites and seem to be doing well in the state. Likewise it seemed to be a good year for Dickcissel, Bobolink, and Upland Sandpiper.

On the other hand, I received no reports of nesting Forster's Terns and little more for the Black Tern. There was only a single report each for Red-shouldered Hawk and Worm-eating Warbler, species of long standing concern. And no one mentioned either King Rail or Bewick's Wren; the last summer King Rail report was in 1999.

Among nonbreeding species, good finds included Western Grebe, Cinnamon Teal, and Black-and-white Warbler. The latter species is an enigma with several summer reports but little knowledge on its nesting status in Iowa. What was lacking this summer was a real rarity like the Ruff and White-winged Dove that spiced up last summer. Maybe next year.

As always, this summary would not be possible without the reports I receive from observers throughout the state. I thank them all for their continuing faithfulness in reporting their seasonal sightings from Iowa. Each year they add a bit more to our growing knowledge of Iowa's birds.

SPECIES DATA

ALL CAPS = Casual or Accidental species

Common Loon: All: 2 summered at Spirit L. (SJD, LAS, ETh), 1 on 2 Jun at L. Macbride (CE), 1 on 7 Jun at Smith L. in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and 1 in alt. plumage on 3–12 Jun at L. Meyer in Winneshiek Co. (Larry Reis fide DeC).

Pied-billed Grebe: Nests or broods were noted at Jemmerson Sl. in Dickinson Co. (LAS), Anderson L. in Hamilton Co. (HZ), Errington M. in Polk Co. (BE), Chichaqua A. in Polk Co. (DT), Colo Ponds in Story Co. (HZ), Banner A. in Warren Co. (AB), Cardinal M. in Winneshiek Co. (DeC), Hanlontown Sl. in Worth Co. (RGo), and in Cerro Gordo, Hancock, and Worth counties (PH).

Red-necked Grebe: All: 2 on 13 Jun at Cheever L. in Emmet Co. and 1 on 28 Jun on a nest there (ETh), Elsewhere, on 7 Jun, 1 was at Eagle L. in Hancock Co. (PH, MPr).

Eared Grebe: All: 1 on 1 Jun at Diehl Pond near Indianola (JGi).

Western Grebe: All: 2 on 1 Jun at Dan Green Sl. in Clay Co. (LAS), 1 on 1 Jun at West Swan L. in Emmet Co. (MCK), 1 on 5 Jun at Big Wall L. in Wright Co. (JJD), and 1 on 11 Jun at Dunbar Sl. in Greene Co. (MPr).

American White Pelican: Peak counts of summering birds were as follows: 78 on 15 Jun at Saylorville Res. (BE); 40 on 4 Jul at Union Sl. NWR in Kossuth Co. (MCK); 130 on 8 Jul at Ventura M./Zirbel Sl. (PH); 47 on 27 Jun at Big Wall L. (JJD); 105 on 11 Jun at Dunbar Sl. (MPr); and 22 on 1 Jul at Pool 19 in Lee Co. (SJD). Flocks of 20 on 29 Jul at Lock and Dam 14 in Scott Co. (DR) and 40 on 29 Jul at Cone M. in Louisa Co. (DAk) may have been early migrants.

Double-crested Cormorant: Besides 10 on 22 Jun at Union Sl. NWR (MCK), 8 on 29 Jul at Mallard M. in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH), and 6 or 7 that summered at Saylorville Res. (AB), singles were found in Appanoose, Clayton, Hancock, Johnson, and Wright counties (TJ, DAK, PH, MPr, JJD).

American Bittern: 1–3 were found in Boone, Dickinson, Hancock, Warren, and Worth counties (JJD, ETh, PH, MPr, AB, CJF, RGo), about typical of recent summers. No one mentioned evidence of nesting.

Least Bittern: 4 nests on 8 Jun at Banner A. (AB) was the only report of nesting. Elsewhere, 1–4 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Greene, Hancock, Jones, Kossuth, Polk, Tama, Winneshiek, and Worth counties (ETh, JJD, CJF, LAS, JGi, PH, MPr, CE, MCK, BE, BSc, DeC, RGo). More were reported this year than in any of my previous 19 years of compiling this report.

Great Blue Heron: Small colonies were noted at Medicine Creek WA. in Wayne Co. (MPr) and in O'Brien (DK). The largest post breeding concentration was 82 on 25 Jul at Saylorville Res. (JGi).

Great Egret: The largest postbreeding concentrations were 53 on 16 Jul at Sedan A. in Appanoose Co. (TJ) and 48 on 31 Jul at Credit Is. in Scott Co. (DR). The only mention of breeding was 2 nests at Chichaqua A. (Loren Lown fide JJD), the first for central Iowa in several years.

Snowy Egret: All: an adult on 2 Jun at Dan Green Sl. (ETh), an imm. on 29 Jun at Port Neal in Woodbury Co. (BFH, GLV), and 2 on 30 Jul at Sedan A. (TJ).

Little Blue Heron: All: an imm. on 22–25 Jul at Saylorville Dam (JGi-photo, DT).

Cattle Egret: 1 on 10 Jul at Sandhill L. in Woodbury Co. (GLV) was the only report.

Green Heron: Besides 12 on 27 Jul at Banner A. (JGi), 1–3 were found in Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Delaware, Hancock, Linn, Polk, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (CJF, DAK, MPr, PH, DT, DeC, BFH). The only mention of breeding was a nest on 14 Jun in Monona Co. (BFH). Most of the reports were from north of I-80, probably an anomaly of reporting.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: From 1–3 were found in Appanoose, Dickinson, Hancock, Jones, O'Brien, Warren, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (TJ, LAS, ETh, RGo, PH, MPr, CE, DK, AB, DeC, GLV). No one mentioned any evidence of nesting.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: 1 on 30 Jul at Sedan A. (TJ) was the only report.

Turkey Vulture: 46 on 19 Jun at Elkader in Clayton Co. (DAK) and 45 on 23 Jul at Algona (MCK) were large summer counts for those parts of the state.

Snow Goose: From 1–6 were found in Clay, Emmet, Greene, Kossuth, Lyon, O'Brien, Warren, and Woodbury counties (LAS, ETh, MCK, MPr, PH, DK, AB, BFH, GLV), about typical of recent summers.

Trumpeter Swan: A total of 13 “wild” pairs nested this year with 12 of them successfully hatching eggs (Ron Andrews, Iowa DNR). With an original goal of 15 established pairs, the release program is getting close to achieving that goal.

Gadwall: From 1–3 were found in Boone, Hancock, Kossuth, and Pocahontas counties (JJD, RGo, MCK, DK), about typical for summer.

American Wigeon: A male on 11 Jun at Crystal Hills W.A. in Hancock Co. (DT) was the only report.

Cinnamon Teal: A male on 1 Jun at Diehl Pond (JGi-photo) is the first summer record since 1986.

Northern Shoveler: A brood on 22 Jun at Welch L. WPA in Dickinson Co. (LAS) was the only report of nesting. Singles were found in Appanoose, Kossuth, Polk, Winnebago, and Winneshiek counties (TJ, MCK, DT, JJD, DeC).

Northern Pintail: All: a pair on 7 Jun at Stoney L. in Dickinson Co. (LAS) and 1 on 15 Jun at Errington M. (BE).

Green-winged Teal: All: 9 on 22 Jun at Eagle L. in Kossuth Co. (MCK) and 4 on 29 Jul at Union Hills W.A. in Cerro Gordo Co. (RGo, PH).

Canvasback: All: 3 on 11 Jun and 1 on 29 Jul at Union Hills W.A. (PH).

Redhead: A brood on 14 Jun at McBreen M. in Dickinson Co. (LAS) was the only report of nesting. Besides the 10 on 7 Jun at Eagle L. in Hancock Co. (PH), up to 5 were reported in Appanoose, Story, Warren, and Worth counties (TJ, MPr, HZ, AB, JGi, RGo).

Ring-necked Duck: 1–3 were found in Emmet, Hamilton, Kossuth, Story, Winneshiek, and Wright counties (LAS, HZ, MCK, DeC, JJD). No one mentioned any evidence of nesting.

Lesser Scaup: From 1–4 were found in Cerro Gordo, Hancock, Hardin, Kossuth, and Warren counties (RGo, PH, DT, MPr, MCK, AB, JGi).

Hooded Merganser: Broods were found at Sedan A. (TJ), DU Marsh in Clay Co. (PH), Smith Sl. in Clay Co. (LAS), Sny McGill A. in Clayton Co. (DAK), Union Sl. NWR and Patterson W.A. in Kossuth Co. (MCK), Runnells A. in Marion Co. (AB), and Errington M. (BE).

Ruddy Duck: The only reports of nesting were a nest with eggs on 8 Jul at Banner A. (AB, 1st county nesting record) and a brood on 27 Jul at Colo Ponds (HZ). As in 2002, fairly large groups were found at several sites; about 40 on 7 Jun at Eagle L. in Hancock Co. (PH), about 25 that summered at Colo Ponds (HZ), and 13 on 7 Jun at Hanlontown Sl. (RGo). From 1–10 were found in Grundy, Kossuth, Polk, and Winneshiek counties (MPr, MCK, BE, DeC).

OSPREY: The big news was the first successful Osprey nesting in Iowa in recorded history. A nest in Spirit Lake fledged 1 yg on 24 Jul (ETh) while a nest at L. Macbride fledged 3 yg in Jul (PS). The introduction program continued with releases made at Don Williams L. in Boone Co. (5 yg), Saylorville Res. (5 yg), and Hartman Reserve in Cedar Falls (4 yg) (PS).

Mississippi Kite: Other than 1 on 12 Jun in Urbandale (RGo), all reports were from Des Moines where 2 were seen on 6 Jul carrying nesting material (JGi). On 12 Jul, 2 adults were seen at a nearby nest (AB, AJ, BSc), the first reported since 2001.

Bald Eagle: An estimated 160 eagle nests were active this year as the population continues to increase. Eagle nests have been found in 62 counties with four (Hardin, Plymouth, Scott, and Worth) added this year (BEh).

Northern Harrier: Broods were found on 13 Jul at Peterson Prairie in Lyon Co. (PH, MCK) and on 12, 20 Jul at Dugout Creek W.A. in Dickinson Co. (LAS, AB). One or 2 were found in Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Hancock, Howard, Iowa, Polk, Sioux, and Worth counties (DeC, CJF, PH, DT, BSc, BE, JVD, RGo) suggesting nesting at at least some of those sites.

Cooper's Hawk: The only nest reported was in Mason City (CJF), a drop from recent years. Singles were found in Allamakee, Appanoose, Kossuth, Marshall, O'Brien, Polk, Warren, and Wayne counties (AB, MCK, MPr, DK, DT) suggesting that a few are found over much of the state.

Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 on 16 Jul near Guttenberg in Clayton Co. (DAk) was the only report.

Broad-winged Hawk: An imm. too young to fly found in Ames on 14 Jul (JJD) was the only report of nesting. One or 2 were found in Allamakee, Lee, and Polk (CE, MPr, AB, RCe) where it is expected while 1 on 7 Jun at Diamond L. in Dickinson Co. (LAS) was out of its usual summer range.

Swainson's Hawk: 1 on 18 Jun near Mason City (CJF) and 1 on 7 Jul near Rush L. in Osceola Co. (ETh) were the only reports.

Peregrine Falcon: Seven nests attempts were reported this year. Successful nests included 4 yg at Davenport, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids, and 3 yg in Louisa Co. Another nest near Davenport apparently fledged 1 yg but details were sketchy. A nest was started but abandoned near Ottumwa, and a nest at Lansing was unsuccessful (PS). Overall, it was a good year for peregrines.

Gray Partridge: Of most interest was a brood on 20 Jul near National in Clayton Co. (DAk), a section of the state where this species is rare. Other broods were reported in Clay (ETh), O'Brien (LAS), and Worth (PH) counties. One or 2 birds were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Kossuth, and Wright counties (JJD, CJF, AB), all expected locations.

Ruffed Grouse: 1 on 4 Jun at Yellow River S.F. (RGo) is the first summer report in 19 years!

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Four active leks with 15 birds were found in early June in Woodbury Co. (Roger Hill fide BEh).

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Four broods were found in Ringgold Co. suggesting that nest success was good this year (Mel Moe, Iowa DNR).

Northern Bobwhite: Birds found in Delaware, Jasper, Linn, Plymouth, and Woodbury counties (MPr, DT, JJD, GLV, BFH) were at the northern fringes of this species' range and hint at a partial recovery from its recent range contraction.

Virginia Rail: 1–4 were found in Allamakee, Dickinson, Hamilton, Hancock, Tama, and Worth counties (FL, SJD, JJD, RGo, PH, MPr, BSc).

Sora: 1–5 were found in Appanoose, Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Jones, Warren, and Worth counties (TJ, JJD, RGo, PH, CE, JGi).

Common Moorhen: A brood on 10 Jul at Goose L. in Clinton Co. (JLF) was the only evidence of nesting. All other reports were from northern Iowa: 2 or 3 on 1 Jun at Silver L. in Worth Co. (KSP, SSP), 1 or 2 on 1–7 Jun at Hanlontown Sl. (RGo, PH), 2 on 7 Jun at Eagle L. in Hancock Co. (PH, MPr), and 1 on 29 Jun at Cardinal M. (L. Reis fide DeC).

American Coot: Nests or broods were noted in Hancock, Polk, Story, Warren, Winnebago, Winneshiek, and Worth counties where it has nested previously (RGo, PH, MPr, BE, HZ, AB, DT, DeC).

Sandhill Crane: Broods were noted at Bakewell's Pond in Allamakee Co. (2 yg, FL), near Camanche in Clinton Co. (1 yg, Mark Cross fide RCe), Otter Creek M. (3 pairs with 2, 1, and unknown no. of yg, Tom Smith fide JJD), and Cardinal M. (1 yg, DeC) indicating a fairly good year for this species. Singles were seen on 22 Jun at Cone M. (CE) and 27 Jun at Morris L. WPA in Wright Co. (JJD), and 4 were at Green Is. A. in Jackson Co. on 10 Jul (JLF).

Black-bellied Plover: All: 1 on 4, 8 Jun at L. Rathbun (TJ).

American Golden-Plover: All: 1 on 3 Jun at Colo Ponds (HZ) and 1 on 8 Jun at Runnells A. (AB).

Semipalmated Plover: Last: 1 on 8 Jun at Cardinal M. (Ellen Bell fide DeC). First and most: 7 on 29 Jun at Port Neal (BFH).

Piping Plover: At Port Neal, on 29 Jun, there were three pairs, each with 4 yg (BFH, GLV), the best nesting success there in several years. At MidAmerican ponds at Council Bluffs, on 26 Jun, there were 8 including 2 chicks (RZ).

Killdeer: Most: 75 on 31 Jul at sod farms in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH).

Greater Yellowlegs: First and most: 14 on 5 Jul at Dunbar Sl. (JGi).

Lesser Yellowlegs: First: 3 on 30 Jun in Palo Alto Co. (SJD) and 1 on 30 Jun at Harrier M. (SJD). Most: About 50 on 29 Jul near Forest City (PH).

Solitary Sandpiper: 1 on 21 Jun at Elk Creek M. in Worth Co. (CJF-details) was an odd date and probably an early fall bird. Otherwise the earliest were 3 at Cardinal M. on 4 Jul (DeC) and 1 at Union Sl. NWR on 4 Jul (MCK). The most was 26 on 24 Jul at Coralville Res. (JLF).

Willet: All: Singles on 28 Jun at Knutson's Pond near Clear Lake in Cerro Gordo Co. (RGo) and 20 Jul at Kettleson Hogsback A. in Dickinson Co. (AB).

Spotted Sandpiper: A nest found on 3 Jun in Warren Co. contained 4 eggs (JGi).

Upland Sandpiper: From 1 to 4 were found in Boone, Buena Vista, Calhoun, Cerro Gordo, Cherokee, Clarke, Dallas, Emmet, Humboldt, Iowa, Jasper, Lee, Lucas, Lyon, Monroe, O'Brien, Pocahontas, Pottawat-tamie, Scott, Sioux, Wayne, Webster, and Woodbury counties (JJJ, DK, SJD, RGo, AB, DHe, JGi, BSc, MPr, CE, PH, MCK, DR, JVD, GLV), more than most summers. Both Schoenewe and Thelen thought it was more common in northwestern Iowa than in past years.

Sanderling: All: 6 on 1 Jun at Trickles Sl. in Dickinson Co. (ETh), 6 at L. Rathbun on 5 Jun, and 1 still there on 8 Jun (TJ) [record latest].

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Most: 50 on 5 Jun at L. Rathbun (TJ). Last: 4 on 8 Jun at McIntosh W.A. in Cerro Gordo Co. (RGo) and 20 on 8 Jun at Cardinal M. (Ellen Bell fide DeC). First in fall: 10 on 29 Jul in Cerro Gordo Co. (PH).

Least Sandpiper: First and most: 26 on 4 Jul in Kossuth Co. (MCK) and 20 on 4 Jul at Cardinal M. (DeC).

White-rumped Sandpiper: All: 4 on 8 Jun at McIntosh W.A. (RGo) and 1 on 14 Jun at L. Rathbun (TJ).

Pectoral Sandpiper: First: 2 on 30 Jun in Palo Alto Co. (SJD). Most: 10 on 13 Jul at Errington M. (BE).

Dunlin: Last: Singles on 7 Jun at Dugout Creek W.A. (LAS) and 8 Jun at Cardinal M. (Ellen Bell fide DeC).

Silt Sandpiper: 2 on 12 Jul near Fenton in Kossuth Co. (MCK) and 6 on 17 Jul near Ogden in Boone Co. (DCH) were the only reports.

Short-billed Dowitcher: First: Singles on 5 Jul at Dunbar Sl. (JGi) and 7 Jul near Mason City (RGo).

Wilson's Snipe: 1 on 30 Jul at Sedan A. (TJ) was the only report.

American Woodcock: All: Singles on 9 Jun at Grammer Grove in Marshall Co. (MPr) and 11 Jul at Horseshoe Bend NWR in Louisa Co. (JLF).

Wilson's Phalarope: All: 6 on 9 Jun at Owego Wetlands in Woodbury Co. (GLV) and a pair still there on 21 Jun (BFH), a male on 1 Jun at Eagle L. in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and a female on 5 Jun at Elk Creek M. (JJJ) probably were breeders. Two on 10 Jul in SW Greene Co. (JJJ) were probably migrants.

Franklin's Gull: All: 3 on 5 Jun at L. Rathbun (TJ), 3 on 7 Jun at Owego Wetlands (GLV), and 308 on 30 Jun at the Spirit Lake landfill (SJD).

Ring-billed Gull: Likely summering birds were noted in 4 locales: as many as 171 on 30 Jun at the Spirit Lake landfill (SJD), up to 37 on 22 Jun at Saylorville Res. (BE), as many as 8 in the Clear L. area (CJF, RGo, PH), and 6 on 1 Jul at Pool 19 in Lee Co. (SJD).

Caspian Tern: 2 on 2 Jun at Rock Creek S.P. in Jasper Co. (MPR), 16 on 10 Jun at Saylorville Res. (JGi), 4 still there on 22 Jun (BE), and 1 on 11 Jun at the MidAmerican ponds (MPR) were all likely late migrants. However, 6 still at L. Rathbun on 23 Jun (TJ), 2 on 25 Jun at Mill Creek S.P. in O'Brien Co. (DK), 2 on 9 Jul at Dan Green Sl. in Clay Co. (ETH), and 1 on 9 Jul at Port Neal (BFH) defy easy definition.

Common Tern: All: 2 on 4 Jun at West L. Okoboji (ETH-details) and 3 on 11 Jun at Clear L. (PH-details).

Forster's Tern: No one provided evidence of nesting but at least 7 on 7 Jun at Eagle L. in Hancock Co. (PH, MPR), 1 on 8 Jun at McIntosh W.A. (RGo), 2 on 30 Jun at Spirit L. (SJD), and 9 on 12 Jul at Marble L. in Dickinson Co. (LAS) were all within its known nesting range. Three on 5 Jun at Little Wall L. in Hamilton Co. (JJD), 1 on 10 Jun at Saylorville Res. (JGi), 2 on 4 Jul at Sedan A. (AB), and 3 on 29 Jul at Saylorville Res. were all likely migrants.

Least Tern: On 26 Jun, there were 16 (including 2 yg) at the MidAmerican Ponds (RZ). On 9 Jul, 2 were at Port Neal (BFH).

Black Tern: Late migrants were numerous with 69 on 5 Jun at Big Wall L. (JJD), 50 on 7 Jun at New L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH), 110 on 7 Jun at Welch L. WPA in Dickinson Co. (LAS), and 63 on 8 Jun at Runnells W.A. (AB). The last migrants were probably 2 on 11 Jun at Dunbar Sl. (MPR) and 22 on 11 Jun at L. Rathbun (TJ). The only evidence of nesting reported was an active nest on 16 Jun at Myre Sl. in Winnebago Co. (JJD) but 6 on 11 Jun at Harmon L. in Winnebago Co. (DT) and 23 on 30 Jun at Grover L. in Dickinson Co.

(SJD) were at potential nesting sites. Likely southbound birds included 2 on 4 Jul at Eagle L. in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 2 on 9 Jul at Port Neal (BFH), 2 on 11 Jul at Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek Co. (DeC), and 7 on 15 Jul at Owego Wetlands (GLV).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: All: 4 on 1 Jun in Allerton in Wayne Co. (AB), 1 on 3 Jun at Milo in Warren Co. (AB), 3 on 4 Jul in Albia in Monroe Co. (AB), 1 on 12 Jul near Ventura in Hancock Co. (CJF), and 1 on 18 Jul in Pleasantville in Marion Co. (AJ) expand the range of this species somewhat. Singles were reported on 2 Jun and 22 Jul at the usual Grinnell site (RGo, MPR).

Black-billed Cuckoo: 1–4 were found in Adams, Allamakee, Dickinson, Hancock, Harrison, Johnson, Linn, Marshall, O'Brien, Polk, Story, Winnebago, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (MPR, RGo, ETH, PH, BFH, CE, DK, LAS, JGi, JJD, CJF). Most of the reports were from north of I-80.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1–6 were reported from 21 counties from all sections of Iowa (DAk, DeC, JGi, RGo, PH, BFH, MCK, DK, MAP, MPR, DR, LAS, DT).

Barn Owl: Five nests were reported: Greene Co., 4 yg fledged; Marion Co., 2 nests with 4 and 3 yg fledged; Tama Co., nest unsuccessful; Taylor Co., 6 yg fledged (BEh).

Eastern Screech-Owl: A family group in Liscomb in Marshall Co. on 24 Jul contained red and gray adults along with 4 red and 1 gray offspring (BPR, MPR).

BURROWING OWL: One old and two 2003 reports: A bird seen from early Jul through Aug 1989 in Black Hawk Co. (MJo, photo) is east of most recent Iowa reports. A pair nested near Percival in Fremont Co. and in late July was accompanied by 2 half-grown yg (WRS-details). A second-hand 2003 report from Clay Co. awaits further evaluation.

Chuck-will's-widow: All: 1 on 11 Jun was at the usual Fremont Co. site (MPr) while another was heard on 14 Jun near L. Rathbun (BSc) at a site where one was heard this spring.

Whip-poor-will: At the fringes of its Iowa range, at least 3 were found in O'Brien Co. (DK, LAS) and 2 were found on 6 Jun at the Sioux City Prairie in Sioux City (BFH).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Northeastern Iowa was the center of reports with 2 nests reported from Winneshiek Co. (DeC) and as many as 12 at the feeders at Pikes Peak S.P. in Clayton Co. (DAk).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Carter and Thompson thought this species was scarce this summer.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: A female with 2 yg on 29 Jun near Spencer (LAS), a male with an imm. on 13 Jul at Hidden Bridge A. in Lyon Co. (PH, MCK), and a pair on 7 Jun at Oak Grove P. in Sioux Co. (JVD) all suggest local nesting. Elsewhere, 1 or 2 were found in Allamakee (FL, MPr), Clayton (2 sites, DAk), and Winneshiek (DeC) counties, all within its known Iowa nesting range.

Pileated Woodpecker: The only nest mentioned was at Bixby S.P. in Clayton Co. (DAk). One or 2 were found in Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Delaware, Hancock, Jones, Louisa, Van Buren, and Worth counties (RGo, CJF, DAk, BPr, MPr, GLV, CE). Only 1 on 22 Jul at Shearer W.A. in Delaware Co. (MPr) seemed to be at a new site.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: 7 reports with singles on 9 Jun at Grammer Grove A. (MPr) and Mason City (RGo) and on 10 Jun at A.A. Call S.P. in Kossuth Co. (MCK) the latest.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 5 reports with the last being 2 on 9 Jun at Algona (MCK) [3rd latest] and 1 on 5 Jun at Liscomb (BPr, MPr).

Acadian Flycatcher: This species seemed to be fairly abundant this summer with as many as 10 reported at sites in Allamakee, Clayton, Dubuque, Harrison, Johnson, Jones, Lee, Louisa, Van Buren, Warren, Wayne, and Winnebago counties (CE, RGo, DAk, JGi, AB, MPr, PH). Only 2 on 29 Jun at Sawmill Hollow in Harrison Co. (AB) were at what appeared to be a new site.

Alder Flycatcher: 8 reports with singles on 11 Jun at Mill Creek S.P. (DK) and at Algona (MCK) the latest. Twenty on 1 Jun at Lost Island L. in Palo Alto Co. (MCK) and 8 on 3 Jun in Algona (MCK) are more than are usually reported.

Willow Flycatcher: As many as 6 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Franklin, Hancock, Howard, Johnson, Polk, Pottawattamie, Van Buren, Warren, Winnebago, Winneshiek, Woodbury, Worth, and Wright counties (JJD, PH, DAk, DT, CE, BE, MPr, JGi, DeC, BFH, GLV, CJF).

Least Flycatcher: Apparent late migrants included 1 on 1 Jun at Liscomb (MPr, BPr), 1 on 7 Jun at Kent P. in Johnson Co. (CE), and 2 on 9 Jun at Algona (MCK). Two on 1 Jun and 1 on 7 Jun at Sny McGill A. (DAk) could have been migrants or nesting birds while 2 on 11 Jul at White Pine Hollow in Dubuque Co. (DAk) are more suggestive of nesting birds. One on 26 Jul at Algona (MCK) is early for a migrant.

Western Kingbird: The only mention of nesting came from the State Capitol in Des Moines (JGi-photo, DAk, AB, RGo) and near Spirit L. (LAS). Another pair was found in late June on the state fairgrounds in Des Moines (DCH). Elsewhere besides 1 found on 27, 29 Jun in Cerro Gordo Co. (CJF, RGo), 1 or 2 were seen in Harrison, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties (KLP, SSP, MPr, GLV), all in its usual Iowa range.

Loggerhead Shrike: The only evidence of nesting reported was broods in Black Hawk Co. (MJo), near Homestead in Iowa Co. (BSc), and in SW Greene Co. (JJD). Up to 5 were reported in Adams, Cerro Gordo, Hamilton, Plymouth, Tama, Van Buren, and Worth counties (MPr, CJF, RGo, HZ, JVD).

White-eyed Vireo: All: singles on 12, 21 Jun at Kent P. (JLF, CE), 12 Jun at Williams Prairie in Johnson Co. (JLF), 22 Jul at Shearer W.A. (MPr), and 29 Jul at L. Macbride S.P. in Johnson Co. (CE).

Bell's Vireo: The only reports of nests were at Squaw Creek P. in Linn Co. (BSc) and Browns L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH). Up to 5 were found in Fremont, Johnson, Lee, Louisa, Muscatine, O'Brien, Polk, Van Buren, Wayne, and Woodbury counties (MPr, CE, RGo, DK, BE, BFH, GLV).

Yellow-throated Vireo: Up to 5 were found in Adams, Allamakee, Cedar, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Crawford, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Fremont, Hancock, Johnson, Marshall, Montgomery, Polk, Ringgold, Van Buren, Wayne, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (MPr, RGo, PH, DAK, BPr, CE, DeC, GLV, CJF). This covers virtually the entire state.

Blue-headed Vireo: 1 on 1 Jun at Algona (MCK) was the only report [2nd latest].

Philadelphia Vireo: All: 1 on 1 Jun at Mossy Glen S. Preserve in Clayton Co. (DAK) and 1 on 4 Jun in Allamakee Co. (RGo) [2nd latest].

Black-billed Magpie: 3 or 4 were at Broken Kettle Grasslands in Plymouth Co. in early Jun (Tracy Walker fide JJD) and 2 were there in late Jul (Matt Wetrich fide JJD). They have been seen there since 1997.

Purple Martin: Colonies were noted in Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Dubuque, Hancock, and Winnebago counties (PH, DAK). Up to 8 individuals were found in Cass, Crawford, Fremont, Ringgold, and Van Buren counties (MAP, MPr), all probably from nearby colonies.

Carolina Wren: The only nest reported was near Burr Oak in Winneshiek Co. (DeC). One or 2 were found in Clayton, Clinton, Fremont, Johnson, Louisa, Lucas, Marshall, Polk, Scott, Story, and Warren counties (DAK, PVN, MPr, JLF, CE, AB, DT, DR, BEh, PH). This species is still doing well.

Sedge Wren: Several people had double-digit counts (high: 22 on 19 Jul at Lost Grove W.A. in Scott Co., DR), with most of them from July. Birds were reported in Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Hancock, Jasper, Johnson, Linn, Polk, Sioux, Story, Warren, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (CE, RGo, PH, DAK, JGi, BSc, BE, DT, JVD, HZ, DeC, GLV). All but one of the reports was from north of I-80 where this species seems to be doing well.

Marsh Wren: As many as 5 in Cerro Gordo, Clinton, Hancock, Johnson, Jones, Polk, Story, Warren, Woodbury, and Worth counties (PH, DR, DAK, CE, BE, HZ, JGi, BFH) were all at sites suitable for nesting.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 on 9 Jul at Bacon Creek P. in Woodbury Co. (GLV) and 2 on 29 Jul at Pilot Knot S.P. in Winnebago Co. (PH) were on the fringes its Iowa range.

Veery: Other than 6 reported on 4 Jun at Backbone S.P. in Delaware Co. (MPr), all reports were of singles; in Iowa, Jones, Marshall, and Polk counties (BSc, CE, MPr, RCe).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: 1 on 1 Jun at Sioux Center in Sioux Co. (JVD) is one of the few summer reports in recent years.

Swainson's Thrush: All: 2 on 1 Jun at Lost Island L. (MCK), 1 on 1 Jun at Sioux Center (JVD), and 1 on 3 Jun at Algona (MCK).

Wood Thrush: As many as 5 were found in 29 counties including all four corners of the state, indicating a statewide but somewhat spotty distribution of this species in Iowa (DAK, AB, DeC, CE, CJF, RGo, PH, BFH, MCK, DK, BPr, MPr, LAS, PVN).

Northern Mockingbird: 1 on 24 Jul in Emmet Co. (DHe) and singles on 16 and 21 Jun at 2 sites in Cherokee Co. (ETh, LAS) were unexpected. In their usual range, on 24 Jul, 7 (including 4 imm.) were found at 3 sites in Iowa Co. (JLF), 2 were at Sedan A. on 11 Jun and 16 Jul (TJ), and birds were present at 2 sites in Wayne Co. (AB).

Cedar Waxwing: Akers and Carter mentioned that this species seemed common in northeastern Iowa this summer which matches my perception of its status.

Blue-winged Warbler: Adults with yg were noted on 21 Jun at Coon Creek W.A. in Winneshiek Co. (DeC) and on 21 Jul near Burr Oak (DeC). One on 8 Jun at Little Sioux Access in Sioux Co. (LAS) was out of its usual summer range. One or 2 were found in Allamakee, Clayton, Lucas, and Warren counties (RGo, DAK, AB, PH).

Tennessee Warbler: All: 4 on 1 Jun at Algona and 1 there on 4 Jun (MCK), and 1 on 9 Jun at Liscomb (MPr, BPr).

Northern Parula: 1 or 2 were found in Allamakee, Appanoose, Fremont, Kossuth, Lee, Louisa, Van Buren, Warren, Wayne, and Winneshiek counties (CE, RGo, AB, MPr, MCK, JGi, DeC).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: 1 on 1 Jun at Bloody Run P. in Clayton Co. (DAK) was the only report.

Magnolia Warbler: All: 2 on 1 Jun at Saylorville Res. (DT), 1 on 4 Jun at Sioux Center (JVD), and a female on 6 Jun at Algona (MCK).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: A female until 11 Jun at Algona (MCK) and 1 on 11–13 Jun at Mason City (PH) are the 3rd and 4th June records for Iowa.

Black-throated Green Warbler: All: 1 on 1 Jun at Amana Woods in Iowa Co. (BSc) and a male on 14 Jun at L. Ahquabi S.P. (PH, AB).

Blackburnian Warbler: A male on 1 Jun at Grammer Grove (MPr) was the only report.

Yellow-throated Warbler: 1 or 2 were found in Allamakee, Johnson, Lee, Polk, Van Buren, and Warren counties (RGo, MPr, BPr, FL, DAK, CE, AB, BE, PH).

Blackpoll Warbler: 1 on 1 Jun at Amana Woods (BSc) is one of the few summer records of this species.

Cerulean Warbler: 1–4 were found in Allamakee, Appanoose, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Johnson, Van Buren, Warren, and Winneshiek counties (CE, RGo, AB, DAK, JGi, MPr, BPr, PH, DeC), all at sites where this species is regular.

Black-and-white Warbler: The 2 reports add somewhat to our knowledge of this phantom of Iowa's summers. A singing adult male was seen on 16 Jun at Hitchcock A. in Pottawattamie Co. (MO) and a female/imm was found on 19 Jul near the Raccoon R. in Dallas Co. (RCe). Do a few hang around to nest in Iowa yearly or are we just seeing nonbreeders?

American Redstart: At least 20 on 4 Jun at Backbone S.P. in Delaware Co. (MPr, BPr) and 12 on 2 Jun at Macbride Nature Rec. A. in Johnson Co. (CE) suggest that this species is still common in suitable wooded habitat. Up to 5 were reported from a number of other sites, all in the eastern half of Iowa.

Prothonotary Warbler: As many as 6 were found in Allamakee, Appanoose, Boone, Clayton, Dallas, Louisa, Warren, and Wayne counties (DAK, RGo, MPr, BPr, TJ, JJD, JGi, AB, AJ, CE), all at sites where this species has been found previously.

Worm-eating Warbler: 1 on 30 Jun at Shimek S.F., Croton Unit (CE) was the only report.

Ovenbird: 21 on 12 Jul at Yellow River S.F. (CE) was the most but as many as 6 were found in Allamakee, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Lee, O'Brien, Sioux, Van Buren, Winneshiek, and Woodbury counties (MPr, BPr, DAK, DK, JVD, DeC, BFH). This species remains fairly common in suitable woodland habitat.

Northern Waterthrush: All: singles on 1 Jun at W. Swan L. in Emmet Co. (MCK) and 15 Jun at Stone S.P. in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Louisiana Waterthrush: 1 or 2 were found in Boone, Clayton, Dubuque, Jones, and Lee counties (PH, DAK, CE), all at usual sites for this species.

Kentucky Warbler: 1 on 5 Jul at Wanata S.P. in Clay Co. (LAS) was out of its usual range. Singles were found in Allamakee, Lee, Louisa, and Warren counties (RGo, CE, MPr, AB, PH).

Mourning Warbler: 4 reports with 1 on 8 Jun at Sioux Center (JVD) the latest.

Hooded Warbler: All: a male on 7 Jun at Ledges S.P. (JJD) and 1 on 13, 30 Jun at Shimek S.F., Croton Unit (MPr, CE).

Wilson's Warbler: 1 on 1 Jun at Liscomb (MPr) is the first Iowa summer record [record latest].

Canada Warbler: 1 on 1 Jun at Liscomb (MPr, BPr) was the only report.

Yellow-breasted Chat: 1 or 2 were found in Johnson, Lee, Louisa, Polk, and Wayne counties (CE, JLF, JGi, RGo, BE, MPr) where this species is expected. Singles on 21 Jun at Browns L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH), and on 11, 31 Jul at Waterman Valley in O'Brien Co. (ETh, LAS), were in northwestern Iowa where it is less expected. It was a good summer for chats in Iowa.

Summer Tanager: 1 or 2 in Appanoose (2 sites), Fremont, Polk, and Van Buren counties (TJ, MPr, RCe) were all in the usual range of this species.

Scarlet Tanager: 1 to 4 were found in Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Floyd, Fremont, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, Van Buren, Warren, Winnebago,

Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (RGo, PH, DAK, JGi, MPr, BFH, DeC) and includes all but far northwestern Iowa.

Eastern Towhee: A few were found in Allamakee, Clayton, Linn, Polk, and Winneshiek counties (DeC, RGo, DAK, JGi, BE, DT), an indication of their eastern Iowa stronghold but underreporting elsewhere.

Clay-colored Sparrow: All: 1 on 7 Jun at West Hottes L. in Dickinson Co. (LAS) and 4 males on 13 Jul at Peterson Prairie (PH, MCK).

Lark Sparrow: Up to 6 were reported in Cedar, Dallas, Delaware, Fremont, Lyon, Mitchell, Monroe, O'Brien, Plymouth, Polk, Warren, and Wayne counties (MPr, AB, BPr, MCK, LAS, PH).

Grasshopper Sparrow: All reports were of 1 or 2 individuals. Surely this species is more common than that suggests.

Henslow's Sparrow: As in the past several years, this species was widely reported. As many as 15 males were found in Appanoose, Cerro Gordo, Jasper, Johnson, Lee, Linn, Louisa, Monroe, Polk, Ringgold, Story, Van Buren, Washington, Wayne, and Worth counties (AB, TJ, CJF, RGo, PH, DT, CE, THK, MPr, BE, JJD, JVD).



Yellow-breasted Chat at intersection of Alpine St. and Grabin Ave. in Johnson Co., 6 June 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

At least 6 males were found near Mason City in Jun and, despite concerted efforts to find a nest, none was located although immatures were seen there in late Jul (RGo, PH). Several on 12, 14 Jul near Nevada (JJD, Mark Loeschke) are the first for well-birded Story County.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: 1 on 1 Jun at Errington M. (BE-details) is the second summer report for Iowa [2nd latest].

Swamp Sparrow: A few were found in Jones, Polk, and Winneshiek counties (CE, BE, DeC) along the edge of its Iowa range.

White-throated Sparrow: 1 heard and seen on 3, 4 Jun in Clive (JCI) was the only report.

White-crowned Sparrow: 1 on 10, 11 Jun in Mason City (RGo-details) is only the 3rd summer report for Iowa [2nd latest].

Blue Grosbeak: A pair in Squaw Creek P. through mid-Jul (BSc, JGi, RGo) and 2 on 16 Jul at Goose L. in Clinton Co. (PVN) were the only reports from eastern Iowa.



Blue Grosbeak nesting in Squaw Creek Park, Linn Co., 6 June 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

Up to 5 were found in Fremont, Lyon, O'Brien, and Woodbury counties where it is regular (MPr, PH, MCK, DK, LAS, BFH, GLV).

Dickcissel: This species seemed to be easy to find this summer; the Pattersons and Thelen commented on its abundance in northwestern Iowa as did Akers in northeastern Iowa. Carter noted that it didn't arrive in Winneshiek Co. until mid-June and was scarce.

Bobolink: Only Akers (abundant in Clayton Co.) and Thompson (common in northern Iowa) commented so I assume that this species was fairly common around the state this summer.

Eastern Meadowlark: 1 on 6 Jun at Sioux City Prairie (BFH) and 3 on 6 Jul at Sioux City (BFH) were at the edge of its usual range.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Nesting was reported in Cerro Gordo, Hancock, Story, Warren, Winnebago, and Worth counties (PH, HZ, AB, DeC). The 20 on 10 Jun at Cardinal M. (DT) and 56 on 15 Jun at Errington M. (BE) were high counts for areas on the edge of its Iowa range.

Great-tailed Grackle: Nests at Banner A. (AB) was the only report of nesting. Elsewhere, up to 5 were found in Greene, Kossuth, Lucas, Polk, Story, and Tama counties (JGi, MPr, MCK, AB, DT, HZ, BSc); they probably nested at most of those sites. A pair on 7 Jun at Huntington M. in Emmet Co. (DHe) was the only new site reported this summer.

Orchard Oriole: Up to 5 were found in Adair, Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Clayton, Crawford, Floyd, Fremont, Jasper, Johnson, Kossuth, Louisa, Lyon, Marshall, Polk, and Pottawattamie counties (MPr, RGo, DAK, JGi, CE, MCK, DT), about typical for an Iowa summer.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: 13 on 25 Jul at Montrose in Lee Co. (RCe) was the only report.



Western Kingbird male near nest site at State Capitol in Des Moines, Polk Co., 7 July 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Belted Kingfisher female near Diehl Wetlands, Warren Co., 19 July 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Sedge Wren male at Neal Smith NWR, Jasper Co., 19 July 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Willow Flycatcher near nest site along 25th Ave. in Warren Co., 14 June 2003 to 30 July 2003. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

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Hitting the Hot Spots in Fremont County

W. Ross Silcock

Fremont County is one of the best destinations in Iowa in terms of species diversity. For several years the County Big Day record for Iowa of 171 species was held by a Fremont County team. The county has a good range of diverse habitats, with the most obvious absence being a large, permanent lake or reservoir. Otherwise, wetlands and forest habitats, both bottomland and upland, are available, as well as a large amount of edge habitat, the latter typical of much of Iowa.

If one wants to spend a full day birding in Fremont County, the following account outlines the places to visit and how to bird each place. I find that many locations can be easily found, but details on how to cover the location once there are scarce; a large state park or national wildlife refuge can be a bit bewildering to the first-time visitor!

Clearly, a full day's birding in spring starts well before dawn with a search for nocturnal species. A good location for these is along the **Spring Branch Loop of the Loess Hills National Scenic Byway**, near Waubonsie State Park. From I-29 Exit 10 go east 4–5 miles on Highway 2 to the base of the loess hills. Turn north (left) onto Bluff Road (L44) and go about a mile to the first gravel road to the right, which has a Scenic Byway sign. Anywhere along the first mile or so is good for Whip-poor-will, Chuck-will's-widow, American Woodcock, Great Horned Owl, and Barred Owl. A tape should entice an Eastern Screech-Owl to respond. The whips and chucks can easily be heard here at dusk also. As dawn breaks, Wild Turkey will be heard.

As light becomes suitable, return to Highway 2 and turn left (east) and go uphill; this wooded area is part of **Waubonsie State Park** (Figure 1). During spring and fall migration Waubonsie is good for migrant warblers, flycatchers, and thrushes, although the extensive habitat provides little concentration of these birds and finding them can be time-consuming (see Manti Park, later). Continue to the top of the hill and turn right onto a paved road to enter Waubonsie State Park (this road has recently been turned over to the county and is no longer a numbered highway). Park at the main parking lot at the top of the hill and bird the immediate area. This spot is good for Summer Tanager. Drive into and through the adjacent campground to the far end of the road (1) and quickly check the edge habitat here. Next, drive back towards the main parking area and you will see two paved roads leaving to the left. Take the second (closest to the parking lot) and follow it quite a distance to its end (2), stopping anywhere that looks good. Field Sparrows are here in the prairie areas on the westward slopes, as well as the expected range of upland woodland birds. Return to the main parking lot and turn right and then immediately right again and follow the road (please!) down a steep curve into an open grassy valley (3). This area is good for woodland birds including Summer Tanager and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, as well as Eastern Phoebe nesting on the restroom building at the end of the road. The final destination at Waubonsie is back on Highway 2 near the bottom of the hill about a quarter-mile east of the junction with L44. There is a large pullout (4) on the north side of the road. Stop here and look into the ravine at the east end of the pullout for Louisiana Waterthrush, which can usually be heard singing here or on the other side of Highway 2. Another spot to check here is a footbridge (5) on the south side of Highway 2 about 200 yards downhill from the pullout.

Walk to it (there is a poorly-defined, somewhat steep, short track to the bridge) and check again for Louisiana Waterthrush as well as other species.

The next stop is another good area for woodland passerines, and especially migrants. **Manti Woods** consists of about 35 acres of upland oak-hickory woodland in the eastern part of Fremont County near Shenandoah. It is a county park and its relatively small size qualifies it as a migrant trap. To get there, continue on Highway 2 eastward, crossing the junction with Highway 275. Continue east through Riverton; 4 miles east of Riverton turn left (north) onto M16 and continue straight north past the west edge of Farragut (a small section at the end of this road is unpaved) and turn right at a T-intersection. This returns you to M16 at its junction with eastbound J40, having bypassed Farragut. Continue east on J40; after about a mile there are some usually-wet, low-lying areas that should be checked for Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and similar meadow species, even rails, depending on water conditions. Continue eastward to a point where the road veers left. To the right (east) is the entrance to Manti Park. Drive in and park at the top of the hill adjacent to a gate (there is a private residence close by). There is an excellent trail, which circumnavigates the park. The entire trail is good for upland woodland species, especially Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, and woodpeckers. Migrant warblers are usually numerous here. One of the best spots is soon after the beginning of the trail (traveling clockwise) where the trail meets a stream (Fisher Creek). Manti Park retains reasonably good undergrowth, unusual in these times of runaway deer populations, and this helps augment the variety of passerines likely here. Sparrows are numerous here in March, April, and October.

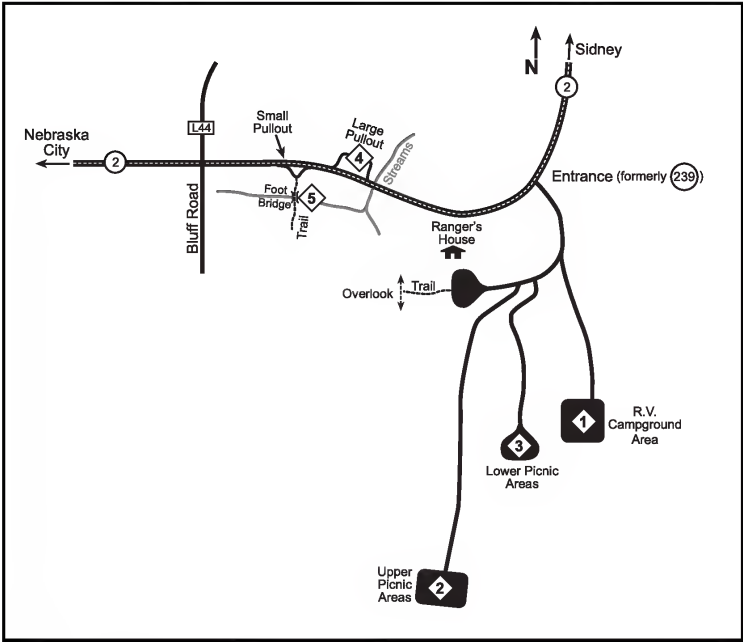


Figure 1. Waubonsie State Park birding areas: (1) RV campground area, (2) upper picnic areas, (3) lower picnic areas, (4) large pullout, (5) footbridge.

To get to the Riverton Area from Manti Park, retrace your route to the town of Riverton. Continue west about 1.5 miles and turn north (right) onto a narrow paved road, which continues north on a levy. This is the southwest corner of the more than 600-acre Riverton Area. While driving north, check the woods and ditch to the right and the brushy wet areas to the left. After a little more than a mile, turn right to a small house-like building, the hunter check station (1). During nonhunting seasons, you can park here and walk eastward down onto the levy (2), which impounds the refuge part of Riverton Area. In wet years this is a nice lake, and in times of less moisture it can be outstanding for shorebirds. Almost anytime it is good for something! You should check the wooded areas en route, including the swamp areas before passing out onto the open levy. Prothonotary Warblers have nested here, and Tree Swallows are common. A telescope is essential here. In winter Bald Eagles are numerous and a surprising list of waterfowl species is here as late as Christmas Bird Count season. After covering this area from the levy, continue to the north on the gravel road. This road around the north end of the refuge includes many places where you should stop. Especially good is the crossing of a main ditch at the north end of the refuge (3) and the wet areas just to the east of the ditch. After the road turns south, there is a parking pullout (4) just before the road turns east again. You can walk out into the refuge (westward) from here to cover wetlands in the center of the area. These wetlands can be outstanding for shorebirds, rails, and bitterns given suitable water conditions. One of the best spots in the refuge for passerines is the brushy spring and swamp just up the hill from the pullout. Park adjacent to the brushy area (5) (there is a stream alongside the road on the south side) and check this area carefully. It is good any time of the year; the water is open year-round. Continuing in your car to the top of the hill you will see to the right an overlook from which you can get an overview of most the refuge. This overlook is useful for locating areas where water is present or where waterfowl are concentrating. A good hike from here takes you from the parking lot downhill to the left (south) through various hedgerow areas to the east end of the main levy impounding the refuge lake. The wetlands adjacent to the levy are productive at times, and the evergreen plantings visible on the hillside opposite and south of the overlook area are good for winter owl roosts. This hike takes some time, however, and may be a bit strenuous for some. This completes coverage of the Riverton Area, although die-hard winter listers might check feeders in the town of Riverton for House Finches and other winter possibilities.

To get to **Forney Lake** from Riverton, continue eastward from the overlook area out of the area and turn south onto the paved road. About a mile south of here is the east edge of Riverton. Turn right (west) and continue through Riverton and on west to the junction of Highways 2 and 275 (about 5 miles west of Riverton). Turn right (north) and follow Highway 275 to Sidney and on through Sidney (careful; navigating through Sidney is confusing!), continuing north of Highway 275. After about 5 miles, turn left at a well-marked intersection onto Highway 145 towards Thurman. Once in Thurman, you reach a stop sign; turn right (north) and you will reach another stop sign. Continue north along the paved Bluff Road (L44) and about two miles to a left (west) turn onto a gravel road. This road skirts the south side of Forney Lake. A telescope is essential here, too. Almost anything can show up here and in the adjacent brushy and riparian habitats depending on season and water conditions. There are a couple of islands near the north side of the lake where pelicans and cormorants congregate in season; other species can be scoped on these islands as well. When water conditions are suitable, Least Bittern and sometimes Common Moorhen are here; the bitterns are best observed in flight in August when they are feeding young and

often fly about above the cattails. The Forney Lake area is often good for Great-tailed Grackle; check any blackbird flocks feeding in the fields south of the lake. The hedgerows at the southeast corner of the lake and around the hunter check station a short distance north of the gravel road on Bluff Road should be checked; this is an excellent place for Bell's Vireo, and also for Harris's Sparrows in winter. The grassy field at the southeast corner of the area (at the east end of the gravel road where it meets Bluff Road) is good for LeConte's Sparrows in late September-October. Continuing westward on the gravel road adjacent to a house, there are excellent riparian and hedgerow habitats that can be explored. Walking out past the pump house at the east end of the large cottonwoods on the north side of the road opposite the house provides a useful vantage point for the west end of the lake.

A couple of other Fremont County specialties that should be looked for are Blue Grosbeak and Western Kingbird. Anywhere on the bottomlands west of I-29 is good; Western Kingbirds are found in deciduous trees around farmhouses and Blue Grosbeaks in brushy areas along drainage ditches. You should simply drive around until these birds are found. A good route to try can be reached by continuing west from Forney Lake on the gravel road, which shortly crosses railroad tracks and joins a paved road. Turn left (south) onto the paved road, which immediately crosses over I-29. Follow this paved road south about 6 miles to the Percival exit on I-29. Where the road crosses I-29 (to your left), turn right and head west about 2 miles, then south about 2 miles, east a mile, and south about 3 miles. Anywhere along this road is good for Western Kingbirds and Blue Grosbeaks, and there are some other worthwhile spots to check. A good area for Lark Sparrow is after the first 2 miles westward from the I-29 Percival interchange as you turn south. To the west is an interesting sandy area where Lark Sparrows are usually present.

At the south end of this route you will meet Highway 2 just on the Iowa side of the Missouri River bridge to Nebraska. This area is being developed by the local Soil and Water Conservation District as a wetland and should be outstanding in the future, given suitable water conditions. A Bald Eagle nest is visible from Highway 2 here. If one parks at the pullout at the small lake on the west side of Highway 2 about a mile into Iowa from the Missouri River bridge, a scan with binoculars (or even the naked eye) to the east will yield a large nest in dead cottonwoods. This nest has been active for several years, although a recent storm blew down the original nest and the birds moved to another tree nearby. Continuing northeastward on Highway 2 about a half mile from the lake you will see a signed intersection to Percival to the north. Turn left (north) here and immediately left again onto an abandoned paved road, old Highway 2. In wetter years this road is good for wetland species, but is worth checking at any time. Following it will return you to where you started, near the Missouri River bridge.

A great way to finish your day is to return to the Riverton Area hunter check station, walk out onto the levy, find a good spot with a view of shorebird habitat, and spend the waning hours of daylight watching the shorebirds arrive (they are diurnal migrants, of course). All sorts of strange things have flown by at this time of day (especially if you have been birding since 4.30 am!).

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Red Knots at Riverton Wildlife Area

Richard T. Trieff

I arrived at Riverton Wildlife Area in Fremont County in southwestern Iowa after 2 P.M. on 23 May 2002. Heavy rains fell on the area the previous night. The rain inspired my journey from Indianola (Warren County) to Riverton, which often has fine shorebird habitat during the spring. I hoped the rainfall would bring down some interesting shorebirds.

As I entered from the west side of the wildlife area, I used a spotting scope to check out the south end of the area. I could barely make out “lumps” flipping into the air. I could see that the perpetrators were shorebirds. While it was too far for me to make an identification, I surmised that they were Ruddy Turnstones. I then headed north along a dike on the west side of the Riverton Area. I observed several large shorebirds on a mudflat to the northeast of my position, perhaps a couple of hundred feet away. I counted seven immobile birds through the scope. They were so still they could have been decoys. I continued walking north. As the distance between me and the mudflat lessened, the birds did not react. When I got to a location to the northwest of the birds, I noticed a little rustle of activity and some head movement. Their heads were striped, reminiscent of a Wilson's Snipe's, with a noticeable eyeline. Their bills were long and decurved. I identified them as Whimbrels.

A few weeks earlier I observed what I believe to be a Whimbrel fly by me heading south at Carney Marsh in Polk County. It had the good grace to bank and head back north and fly by me again. Its most noticeable feature was its long, decurved bill. I poured over field guides checking out the features of Whimbrels as a result of that cursory sighting. So when I saw the Whimbrels at Riverton, with my previous experience fresh in mind, I was comfortable with the identification.

The dike at Riverton turned to the north and soon I was able to observe these apparently weary shorebirds from northeast, north, and northwest of their location on the mudflat. After several minutes of observation, I continued walking the dikes for about 30 minutes or more. Without seeing much in the way of shorebird activity, I retraced my steps to the Whimbrels. They had been joined by several Rudy Turnstones and a Sanderling, and a few of the Whimbrels were now moving around a bit. I also observed on a mudflat west of the Whimbrels that several shorebirds had landed where before there had been none. There were Ruddy Turnstones and a few Black-bellied Plovers. Additionally, I scoped a shorebird that made me think of a Buff-breasted Sandpiper because of its under-parts coloration. However, the bird I was looking at was stockier, presented a more horizontal posture, and its bill was straight and substantial. As I got closer, I saw that there were three Red Knots present — two with buffy breasts and gray backs and one with white under parts. They were intermediate in size to the Ruddy Turnstones and the Black-bellied Plovers, all of which were in close proximity to one another.

From that vantage point I was able to alternately observe each mudflat and the interesting shorebirds they held. I did so for ten or fifteen minutes. One time, as I turned my attention from the Whimbrels to check the other mudflat, I caught sight of the knots and the plovers in flight as they flew northward. As I trekked back along the dike toward where I entered the Riverton Wildlife Area, I periodically looked back to see the Whimbrels still at rest.

When I returned to Indianola, I posted a report of my sightings on the Iowa Bird listserv. Several birders ventured out to Riverton in the days that followed but no one else sighted the Whimbrels or the Red Knots.

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Iowa Ornithologists' Union Fall 2003 Business Meeting

11 October 2003

President Richard Tetrault called the Iowa Ornithologists' Union business meeting held at the Hitchcock Nature Center, Crescent, Iowa to order at 3:30 P.M.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes from the summer board meeting were published in the IOU journal, *Iowa Bird Life*. There was one error; Hank Zalatel was present at that meeting. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report. Rita Goranson reported that income to date has been \$11,121.67 plus \$5,000 from the Larson Memorial. At present the balance is \$11,674.90, which includes the \$5,000 Larson Memorial.

Registrar's Report. As of 8 October 2003, IOU has 465 members, with revenue from those members at \$11,150. Of the 465 members, 70 are new members, 52 of which are Goldfinch, 9 Fledgling, 4 Bluebird, 3 Oriole, and 2 new Osprey members. IOU lost 42 members causing a reduction in revenue of \$863. The breakdown of lost members was 20 regular, 24 family, 15 student memberships, and 20 institution memberships.

David Edwards's current plan is to send by first-class mail renewal notices for 2004 dues to all members on about 29 December.

Publications Committee Reports

THE GRAND VIEW BY TOM KENT, CHAIR

The Publications Committee was reconstituted January 2003 doing business by e-mail. They developed a proposed budget and new bylaws. They examined the publications and associated costs and developed new ideas on cost savings and revenue enhancement. Contributions and a new dues structure helped raise money for this year. The board discontinued Life Membership. For 2003, the committee budgeted 144 pages for *Iowa Bird Life* and 48 for *IOU News*. The number of pages may be expanded by using donations to the Publications Enhancement Fund, which amounts to \$1,500 at this time. Budgeted pages for 2004 include 160 for *Iowa Bird Life* and 48 for *Iowa News*, but these can also be supplemented from the fund.

The total cost for publications will be reduced from \$14,270 in 2002 to about \$10,066 in 2003, a reduction of over \$4,000.

IOWA BIRD LIFE BY KAY NIYO, EDITOR

A decrease in pages and cost was needed. She decreased margins, white space, condensed six pages of inside front and back cover material to two pages for the inside covers. She increased numbers of photos with the help of Jay Gilliam who sends her a CD with each field season's bird photos. She is using a new printer who is able to print a 4-page signature instead of a 16-page signature. There also was some discussion about using a downloadable PDF file of *IBL* on the Internet. Niyo said that can be done, but may impact membership dollars. A full discussion of methods to link it with membership registration would be needed.

IOU News BY PAUL HERTZEL, EDITOR

He saved cost by reducing page numbers. A 1- to 12-page publication costs \$600. He is putting some advertisements in the *IOU News*, which helps.

LISTSERV AND WEB SITE BY ANN JOHNSON, EDITOR

Web site and listserv both keep growing. There are management problems if people are excluded who are not members of the IOU. The price is going up on the listserv because membership is growing.

Costs are being covered and there is some revenue. Johnson reminded people who are going to buy cameras, binoculars, or scopes, to use the web site to access Eagle Optics. IOU receives a nice percentage of sales generated through the web site. There is also a potential for more advertising on the web site than just the Nature Store. One example would be advertisers for bed and breakfasts.

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS BY JIM DINSMORE, MEMBER

IOU has new editors for both *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News*. They are working with tremendous effort to provide good quality publications. Members should tell advertisers that they saw their ad in the *IOU News* to encourage more ads.

Records Committee. Ann Johnson, secretary, said the Records Committee met this morning and is currently working on 2003 records. They have a nominee to present to the board for 2004.

Membership Committee. Ric Zarwell, chair, reported that the six-member committee has met two times. They have worked on the new brochure and business cards, which they passed out. He invited people to pick up some of the brochures. They are going to give away a prize worth over \$50.00 in value to the person who brings in the most new members. Contest will end at the next meeting.

For the fall meeting, they distributed posters with a registration paper for this meeting in libraries, bird stores, etc.

Conservation Committee. Ric Zarwell, chair, said the committee has met once and made a decision to support the Important Bird Areas program. The committee will follow up on any potential source of funding.

Finance Committee. Linda Zalatel, chair, reported that the committee has met and worked on a projected budget for next year. With this projection we will under-recover expenses by about \$1,000, but if we can sell more memberships, we could realize a profit.

Spring Meeting. Sharon Stilwell, vice president, reported 103 people registered for the fall meeting. They came from as far away as Wisconsin. Four attendees were student guests. Thanks to Clem Klaphake and other volunteers who organized the field trips.

The location for the spring meeting is still undecided. Danny Akers has offered to host the spring IOU meeting in NE Iowa provided a suitable location can be found.

IOU also has a possible offer from Karen Disbrow and the Iowa City Bird Club to host a meeting. Decisions on when and where to hold the spring IOU meeting will be made soon.

Scholarship. Jim Dinsmore reported that IOU has given a 1-year membership to four students who are interested in ornithology and birds. Three of them attended the fall meeting. Several of the students have also received the Myrle Burk scholarships. Myrle Burk was a long time member of the IOU.

Rivers and Bluffs Birding Festival. Ric Zarwell announced The Rivers and Bluffs Fall Birding Festival will be held in Lansing, Iowa on 7–9 November 2003. Last year's festival drew 175 people from 39 cities and 4 states. This year there are boat trips scheduled. Last year there were over a half million waterfowl on Pool Nine of the Mississippi River. He said there should be 200,000 or more waterfowl this year. Iowa's Important Bird Areas, IOU, and others sponsor the festival.

IOU Trips. Mike Overton said IOU is looking for a way to offer in-state as well as out-of-state birding trips. The goal would be to keep the cost at one-third to one-half the cost of comparable trips taken through established birding tour companies. IOU could add a reasonable administrative fee to cover IOU expenses. IOU would like to keep the cost affordable. Trips to places such as Minnesota, Lower Rio Grande Valley, southern California in the Salton Sea area, and other good birding areas could be offered. IOU needs to work out details, mainly liability insurance, before this will become reality.

Bequests. Dick Tetrault spoke about bequests. IOU needs a better plan for handling them. Dick requested that anyone with any information on handling trusts to please contact him.

Bird Line. The Bird Line is not being used because the listserv is doing such a great job.

NEW BUSINESS

Important Bird Area. There was a ceremony to dedicate Hitchcock Nature Area as an Important Bird Area. This site is the first to be dedicated. Signs were presented to Chad Graeve, manager of the Hitchcock NA, indicating that Hitchcock is an Important Bird Area. Congratulations to the Hitchcock Nature Area.

Margrieta Delle Book Sale. Karen Disbrow thanked the IOU for allowing her to sell books, etc. for the Margrieta Delle memorial. The Iowa City Bird Club is planning the memorial, possibly, a bench or kiosk telling about the park and bird species seen at the Hickory Hill Park.

Thank You to Sharon Stilwell. Thanks were extended to Sharon Stilwell for planning the

fall meeting and for the good food provided at the meeting. Thanks to the staff of the Hitchcock Nature Center for hosting the meeting.

Hank Zalatel moved and Ric Zarwell seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Susan Spieker, secretary

Iowa Ornithologists' Union Board of Directors Meeting

12 October 2003

The IOU Board met during the fall meeting held at the Hitchcock Nature Center, Crescent, IA. In attendance were Richard Tetrault, president; Sharon Stilwell, vice president; Rita Goranson, treasurer; Sue Spieker, secretary; and board members Bob Cecil, Judy Garton, John Rutenbeck, and Ric Zarwell. President Tetrault called the meeting to order.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report. The minutes and the Treasurer's report were covered at the membership business meeting on 11 October and are contained therein.

Records Committee. The Records Committee nominated Matt Kenne to fill the expiring term of Paul Hertzell. Matt's term will expire in 2009. Bob Cecil moved and Ric Zarwell seconded a motion for the board to appoint Matt to the Records Committee. The motion carried.

Membership Committee. Membership renewals are progressing. Two new members joined during the weekend meeting. Ric Zarwell forgot to mention after the banquet that there would be a \$50 prize to the person who brings in the most new members. The Membership Committee finalized their bylaws and will submit them to the board for approval soon.

Conservation Committee. There was a notice in the last *IOU News* about an anonymous benefactor who was potentially going to make money available for a suitable project if IOU can match the funds.

IOU Bird Trips. The board thought that bird trips were a good idea. IOU will need to get liability insurance. Not only could we have in-state field trips, but the prospect of out-of-state trips is very appealing. Dick Tetrault appointed Mike Overton, Bob Cecil, and Ann Johnson to look into this.

Bird Line. The board discussed whether to continue the Bird Line, which costs \$35.00/month. The majority of our membership gets their bird sightings from the listserv. Bob Cecil moved and John Rutenbeck seconded the motion to disconnect the Bird Line on 1 January 2004. The motion carried. Notification will be in the *IOU News* and on the web site.

Bequests. IOU needs to recognize bequests. It was decided that bequests will be posted in *IOU News* once a year in the final newsletter.

Merchandise Sales. Linda Zaletel requested additional money to buy more denim shirts in small and medium sizes. They are in great demand. Sue Spieker moved and Bob Cecil seconded a motion to allot up to \$1,000 for items for resale. The motion carried.

New Business. IOU will place left over money from this fall meeting into the Meeting Fund. It would be desirable to realize a profit from the meetings.

Nominating Committee. The newly appointed committee is Jim Sinclair, Mark Proescholdt, and Ric Zarwell.

Bob Cecil moved and John Rutenbeck seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Spieker, secretary

Fifty Years Ago in Iowa Bird Life

James J. Dinsmore

The pen-and-ink drawings by Earnest Steffen of Cedar Rapids were the topic of the lead article in the December 1953 issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. Author Steffen described some of the techniques he used to produce the pleasing drawings that illustrated a number of articles in *Iowa Bird Life*. An article by James Hodges described changes in the birdlife around Davenport in the previous decade. Hodges noted that Great Egrets had returned as a nesting species, and both Upland Sandpiper and Western Meadowlark were more common than they had been a few years previously. He also noted that the King Rail was still common around Fruitland, Iowa despite recent drainage there. That species is now difficult to find anywhere in Iowa. Changes for numerous other species are also described. One of several articles by William Youngworth of Sioux City asks whether some of our small songbirds are doomed and describes several species that he thought were becoming rarer. A shorter note by Youngworth is more positive. There he describes finding several Henslow's Sparrows at Kalsow Prairie in Pocahontas County.

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Goldfinch \$20, Blue-bird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Additional family members, \$4 per person. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Send subscriptions, membership payments, back issue requests, or address changes to David C. Edwards, 2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014 (dcejce@qwest.net).

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS: Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent in Word or WordPerfect to the editor. Research manuscripts will be sent for peer review. Submission of material should be by e-mail attachment or IBM-formatted 3.5" diskette; alternatively, by mail, typed or handwritten.

Photos and graphics: Submit photos and slides preferably as TIFF (*.tif) images or as high resolution JPEG (*.jpg) images in e-mail attachment, on 3.5" diskette or CD, or by mail. All photos, slides, and graphics will be returned.

Send all materials other than seasonal field reports to Kayleen A. Niyo at Kay@KayNiyo.com or by mail to 25100 Sunset Lane, Evergreen, CO 80439. Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue (Vol. 1), April 1 for spring issue (2), July 1 for summer issue (3), October 1 for fall issue (4)**. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

IOU NEWS: Paul Hertzelt, Editor, 1432 East State Street, Mason City, IA 50401 (phertzelt@rconnect.com)

IOU WEB SITE: <<http://www.iowabirds.org>>, Ann Johnson, Webmaster. On-line resource for rare bird alerts, checklists, site guides, IOU information and membership. Support the IOU through purchases at the on-line IOU Nature Store.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Aaron Brees, Christmas Bird Count Editor, 8712 Carole Circle, Apt. 14, Urbandale, IA 50322 (abrees@hotmail.com).

IOWA BIRDLINE: Danny Akers (warbler_1231@hotmail.com)

ADDRESS CHANGES: Send address changes/membership subscriptions to Registrar David C. Edwards, 2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014 (dcejce@qwest.net).

UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION: 14–16 May 2004, Spring Village Creek Bible Camp, Lansing, IA

DESIGN: Lynn Ekblad, Ames, IA

GRAPHICS: Richard Beachler, Boone, IA

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